Inclusive Policy Networks for Participatory Place Branding:

Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement

Using an Action Intervention Methodology

by

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The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

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The project and ideas contained in this dissertation have been long in the making. My interest for the topic of place branding grew with the most incredible professional and personal experience that was my time as Deputy Director of the Barcelona Pavilion at the 2010 Shanghai World Expo. A spark of curiosity around the communication of place identities transnationally led to an avid need to better understand the process of communicating place brand identities to both internal and external publics. During the 2010 World Expo I was able to have countless conversations about public diplomacy, nation and city branding with a range of public diplomats, government officials, academics, and marketing and communications practitioners. By the end of that incredibly stimulating journey, in which I was arguably part of the machinery of place branding, I started to question the effectiveness of public place branding practices. I was concerned with the lack of stakeholder engagement, particularly the disengagement of civil society in the place branding process, and the effects of counter-narratives arising from disengaged groups. I also witnessed the potential for amplification of contested messages in the network society, with their associated profound effects in official or formal public branding campaigns. This indicated the impossibility to meaningfully co-create place brands through mere top-down hierarchical decision-making processes, and the need to find new ways to develop strongly grounded and supported place identities, if governments were to enhance positive reputations for places.

Upon conclusion of the Shanghai World Expo I moved to Tasmania, Australia, to start a new life adventure. Once established and working in marketing and communications in the not-for-profit sector, and still feeling curious about place branding, I was extremely lucky to be offered a scholarship to conduct doctoral research at the University of Tasmania in 2011. Doctoral study enabled me to combine theory with previous practice culminating in the production of the present dissertation.

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This dissertation is for you all.

ABSTRACT

Recent scholarly research on place branding highlights that hierarchical models aimed exclusively at economic development often serve short-term instrumental purposes that fail to acknowledge the complex and dynamic nature of places. Similarly, the rise of Web 2.0 technologies and the network society has challenged formal, top-down, business-oriented brand communication by enabling and amplifying horizontal, often contested, communications about places by a large number of actors including grass roots activists. In light of such concerns, scholars have called for research into holistic models of stakeholder engagement that better reflect the communicative process of co-creation of place identities and images.

Reflecting the challenges that new forms of horizontal and non-linear communication exchanges in the network society have brought about, this dissertation develops an alternative, bottom-up, participatory model of place branding that countenances greater involvement of actors, particularly from civil society. Situated within the broad paradigm of participatory action research, the study applies the alternative model employing the method of sociological intervention to investigate stakeholder interaction in the processes of developing and managing place brand identities. The before-and-after research design utilises interviews and focus group discussions to empower participants to collectively reflect on their practices and communicative interactions, as well as on the potential for collaboration towards sustainable place branding.

The participatory, intervention methodology is applied to the case of Tasmania, an island-state and region in the Commonwealth of Australia. Tasmania's brand is made up of strong formal government-led destination and country-of-origin brands focused on high quality, niche produce and a clean and green environment and supported by the positive reputation of major agribusinesses. However, these formal attempts are challenged by other private business brands emphasising alternative cultural and tourism experiences; and by civil society organisations highlighting environmental concerns such as threats to world heritage areas and unsustainable aquaculture. The State's regional branding process is particularly relevant to this study because its reputation has been driven by this contestation between public, private and civil society branding attempts, generating a brand architecture that often results in uncoordinated and ineffective branding efforts.

Employing the method of sociological intervention in the case of Tasmania, the research found that participants gained an appreciation of the value of the alternative, network-based model, recognising its potential to enhance effective place branding practices in Tasmania. However, they also identified several impediments to the development and operationalisation of such a model for enhanced collaboration linked in particular to existing expectations, institutions and

power relations. Overall, participants' discussion of the alternative network governance approach demonstrated the potential of policy networks as more inclusive, effective and legitimate governance arrangements to operationalise participatory place branding than current top-down approach. A further finding was that the use of the participatory action research and intervention methodology is itself a practical tool to achieve more holistic stakeholder engagement.

PART 2: INVESTIGATING AND ALTERNATIVE PARTICIPANT-GOVERNED NETWORK APPROACH: A CASE STUDY OF TASMANIA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAP – Australian Associated News

ABC – Australian Broadcasting Corporation

ABS – Australian Bureau of Statistics

AF – Atkinson Foundation

ALP – Australian Labor Party

BT – Brand Tasmania

CIW – Canadian Index of Wellbeing

COO – Country-of-Origin

CSIRO – Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

HEC – Hydro Electric Commission

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies

IMAS – Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies

IR – International Relations

LAG – Local Action Groups

MOFO – Mona Foma Festival

MONA – Museum of Old and New Art

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisations

NSW – New South Wales (Australian State)

P2P – People-to-People

PAR – Participatory Action Research

PPP – Public-Private-Partnerships

RFA – Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement

RTO – Regional Tourism Organisations

SBS - Special Broadcasting Service

SI – Sociological Intervention

SDL – Service Dominant Logic

TPL – Tasmanian Leaders Program

TICT – Tourism Industry Council Tasmania

TIM – Tourism Industry Monitor

TLP – Tasmanian Liberal Party

TT – Tourism Tasmania

T21 – Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy

US – United States

UTG – United Tasmania Group

VJP – Visiting Journalist Program

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I have always viewed place reputation as a political and sociocultural field as much as a marketing field. I'm pleased to see that this dimension has been gaining ground in recent years.

(Morgan 2016, The Place Brand Observer)

In light of increased competition in the global marketplace countries, regions, cities and neighbourhoods now engage in place branding processes. Governments are increasingly resorting to corporate marketing and branding principles and tools to enhance a positive reputation to attract investors, students, visitors and skilled migrants (Papadopoulos 2004; Rainisto 2003). As a result, place branding has emerged in the last two decades as a promotional marketing tool to support place development. Place branding has therefore attracted significant public investment following a rationale of economic development. The use of place marketing as a tool for selling places, their products and services has evolved into the use of place *branding* as a governance strategy for the management of perceptions about places (Anholt 2009; Hanna & Rowley 2011). Accordingly, place branding has gradually developed into a tool for public policy particularly linked to place management and development with implications across many other policy areas (Eshuis et al 2013; Pasquinelli 2010).

Places, however, are neither products nor services. Places are multi-layered, dynamic, and political entities (Aitken & Campelo 2011). In this sense, the lack of a clear conceptual framework hindering the advancement of the discipline of place branding is proof of the inherent complexity of the place construct (Gertner 2011b). Other relevant issues include: lack of clear benchmarks and success measurement framework; lack of stakeholder engagement; and the co-existence of contested brand messages and counter-narratives, often leading to a myriad of brands that result in confusion in the minds of consumers. Consequently, the application of marketing and branding principles to places has brought about significant challenges to both scholars and practitioners that essentially bring into question the effectiveness of official or public place branding and, ultimately, whether place branding is a legitimate use of taxpayer's money.

Governments have typically adopted a top-down approach to develop place brands characterised by narrowly framed instrumental decision-making processes to establish a place brand. The processes consist in defining static attributes about the place that are then communicated to domestic and foreign audiences through marketing and public relations campaigns. The approach serves particular interests of the government in office at the time and is characterised by a lack of engagement with other stakeholders, notably with civil society. Critics of the current top-down, government-led approach to place branding argue that this approach is instrumental, since place identities at the heart of place brands are not static but rather dynamic constructs formed and affected by fluid and constant communication and re-interpretation of place in the public sphere (Castells 2007). Consequently, one-way static and short-term approaches serve narrowly-framed objectives (Hankinson 2005) and are at odds with the complex and dynamic process of place identity formation. Furthermore, top-down place branding processes often face opposition from grass-roots groups and organisations that communicate contested messages and convey counter-narratives organically in the social network[1]. Finally, place brands that are focused on certain aspects of place can and often result in the commodification of place identities (Colomb & Kalandides 2010; Lucarelli & Hallin 2015).

As a result of the challenges outlined above, academics and practitioners are concerned with the lack of success measurement and the legitimacy of place branding. Scholars have been advocating in the last ten years for a multidisciplinary, more holistic and inclusive approach to advance theory and practice towards effective place branding processes, calling for research on participatory place branding models (Eshuis & Edwards 2013; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008; Braun et al 2010; Zenker & Martin 2011).

Places are in fact complex entities and their identities are co-created, formed and affected by a range of actors through communicative exchanges in social networks (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Kalandides et al 2012). Such communicative exchanges have been shaped by the advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) enabling horizontal, non-linear communication among users in the public sphere (Castells 2008). I argue that meaning about places is constantly created, recreated and re-imagined by a myriad of stakeholders, from residents to consumers, to governments and private business. Consequently, the new patterns of communication have challenged the effectiveness of one-way formal place brand messages and allow larger scale amplification of both formal and informal messages about place in the network society (Castells 2008).

These changes in communication have disrupted and challenged traditional place branding practices and led scholars to rethink existing models and structures for place branding. In their top-down approach to branding places governments, typically through public agencies (tourism and exports) and government organisations (national, regional and city governments), often with the assistance of consultants, develop and establish a set of positive identity values or attributes about the place that then get communicated and reinforced through formal promotional and communication campaigns. The expectation is that these strategies reinforce a positive reputation for the place than in turn supports and benefits economic development in the place (namely:

[1] By organic communication processes I mean those exchanges of meaning that emerge or sprout out of the established system or structure from the bottom-up in a non-hierarchical and non-liner manner (see Castells 2007). In this thesis, organic is understood in opposition to formal or strategic communication.

increase investment, visitation, exports). This practice, however, fails to observe that information about places is constantly and organically communicated informally, in addition to, and often in conflict with, any formal strategic communication (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008). As mentioned above, since places are dynamic and ever-evolving entities, determining a static set of attributes focused on a particular component or set of components of the place to develop an identity for the place that would affect its image positively not only carries the risk of commodifying certain cultural, historical, and traditional aspects of place, but also of failure in the event of a crisis implicating any of those components (Avraham 2009; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2015). In this research, I argue that branding places requires a holistic, inclusive, flexible, and resilient approach to managing the identity of places. Moreover, I argue that the focus should shift from managing the reputation of a place to managing the network of stakeholders that form the place identity, through their formal and informal involvement in branding the place. I posit, in line with Eshuis and Klijn (2012) that the challenge for place brand scholars and managers is a governance one. Since the identity of a place is co-created by numerous stakeholders, I argue that top-down hierarchical approaches need to give way to bottom-up participatory processes that better reflect the co-creative process underlying the creation of place identities. In this context, the development of network governance and, in particular, policy networks, offer promising avenues for the operationalisation of participatory place branding practice.

It is encouraging that scholars are increasingly recognising the importance of stakeholder engagement and participation to develop coherent and effective place branding processes. In particular, they have identified the need to engage residents in decision-making processes. In this research, I posit that problematising the lack of stakeholder engagement alongside democratic participation of civil society is relevant and necessary to advancing theory and practice in place branding. With this aim, I analyse the governance and structures underlying place branding processes to argue that policy networks are superior governance arrangements that could support more inclusive, participatory and holistic place branding processes.

Hence, this study investigates stakeholder interaction and communication patterns in place branding processes through a participatory action research design. The research is conducted through a single case study of Tasmania, an island-state in the Commonwealth of Australia (Yin 2003). The objectives of the study are two-fold. Firstly, I investigate the context and particularities of stakeholder relationships in place branding process through a series of in-depth interviews. Subsequently, I employ the method of sociological intervention (SI) (Touraine 1978) involving a series of focus group discussions to assess a proposed alternative governance model and its application to the case under review. The SI approach enables me to employ participatory action research as an effective tool to study stakeholder interactions in dynamic identity-formation processes, like place branding, in a quasi-real scenario. In this context, the SI method empowers participants to not only reflect on their current practices, but potentially also to share knowledge in collaborative and inclusive processes to enact change.

1.1 Aim of the study

The overall aim of this research is to inform place branding policy by advancing the development and operationalisation of more participatory governance models of place branding processes. Reflecting on the challenges that hierarchical place branding models face and reflecting on the complexity of places, this research then responds to scholarly calls for further research to develop holistic models of stakeholder engagement in the process of place branding. It focuses on the advancement of theory and practice for participatory place branding processes, in particular the operationalisation of participation and the development of new research methods to study stakeholder interactions. Table 1 below provides an overview of the structure of the dissertation:

Part I: Theoretical Development			Part II: Case Study			Part III: Reflections on the Case Study	
Chapter Two	Chapter Three	Chapter Four	Chapter Five	Chapter Six	Chapter Seven	Chapter Eight	Chapter Nine
Places as dynamic constructs	The co-creation nature of place identities	Participatory governance models for place branding	Research design: Sociological Intervention Method	Background to the case: Tasmania	Data Analysis	Discussion	Conclusion

Table 1. Structure of the dissertation (Author's own).

Scholarly attention has recently shifted towards participatory branding and focused on increasing the stakeholder dialogue and highlighting the need to empower residents for effective place branding (Ind & Bjerke 2007; Gregory 2007; Hatch & Schultz 2008). Research on participatory place branding, however, is still in its infancy and inquiry into holistic place branding governance models is scarce. In this study I resituate place branding as a policy tool to argue that the management of the identity and reputation of a place represents a governance rather than a marketing challenge. Since the images and reputations of places are highly subjective and affected by their social environment, managing the network in which place branding occurs is key. Furthermore, the emergence of ICT has forever changed patterns of interaction in the public sphere and thus branding one-way messaging is losing its legitimacy (Castells 2000). Place identities and images are now constantly imagined, consumed, communicated and reimagined organically in social networks and are rarely tied to a constructed reality based on scripted corporate marketing slogans. Finally, place identity, at the heart of the place brand, is a complex and dynamic construct, socially co-created and affected by communication flows. Consequently, promotional strategies based on static attributes often fail to enhance positive reputations and face opposition from organically produced counter-narratives.

Despite the growing interest among contemporary place branding scholars on more inclusive and participatory place branding processes that would support greater stakeholder engagement, place branding practice remains focused on communicating place brands through official marketing, promotional, and advertising campaigns supported by logos and slogans (Govers & Go 2009; Kavaratzis 2012). However, as demonstrated in practice, short-term brand communication approaches lead to linear, instrumental and narrowly-focused decision making and result in the misrepresentation of the complex, dynamic and collective nature of place brands (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2012). In addition, such practice has traditionally marfinalised civil society and other stakeholders, notably in the design and decision-making phases of the place branding process (Therkelsen et al 2010). In this setup, traditional hierarchical place branding structures have hindered the development of more inclusive processes. This is partly due to the traditional role and responsibilities of governments and public sector as service providers, as well as leaders and legitimisers of the process of place branding, alongside issues of power, gatekeeping or control of the place brand to serve particular political interests (Mayes 2008).

The meaning of place brands, as I argue in this research, is socially constructed and negotiated through communicative processes of co-creation. Therefore, in this study I posit that there is a need to scope governance approaches to stakeholder engagement that reflect better the multi-layered nature of place identities through deliberative, democratic and inclusive processes (Aitken & Campelo 2011).

In particular, this study observes the co-creation process of place brands and the socially constructed nature of place identities in the network society, to gain a deeper understanding into the practical implications and applicability of the concept of participatory place branding. This study does so first by reflecting on the interactions between stakeholders involved in place branding processes and then developing an alternative network governance model to enable greater stakeholder participation. Drawing primarily from the literatures of place branding, network governance, communications and sociology, I propose a holistic, horizontal and non-linear network governance approach to participatory place branding. I argue that policy networks are more adaptive and suitable alternatives for the dynamic, ever-changing and bottom-up process of identity formation. The applicability of the alternative model proposed here is further explored in practice through a case study of the Australian state of Tasmania. The study represents the first attempt to test the potential of network governance to enhance participation and effectiveness in place branding processes[2]. From the analysis, I posit that a network model of governance for place branding could enhance stakeholder engagement. In particular, I argue that an alternative participant-governed policy network model provides a platform for stakeholders to engage, communicate, debate and negotiate particular interests. The alternative model also provides an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on their different interpretations of the place branding task, its purpose and associated actions. Finally, a more inclusive model can better accommodate the views of the different stakeholder groups involved, which potentially leads to the establishment of a common vision for the place. Under such model, collaboration for place branding is achieved by empowering stakeholders to both co-create and collectively convey a strong place brand identity.

Finally, I posit that policy networks are resilient, adaptable, open and flexible governance models that could better support greater stakeholder engagement and information-sharing. Ultimately, collaboration adds to greater public value (Hankinson 2015) and effectively translates into a more coherent brand and a better reputation for the place. A collaborative process also constitutes to a more efficient, democratic, and legitimate process that merits governments' investment of taxpayers' contributions.

1.2 Research design and research question

As outlined above, through the application of participatory action research and in particular the method of SI, the study invites participants to jointly reflect on their place branding strategies and actions, as well as assessing the potential for collaboration towards sustainable place branding. In particular, the study addresses the following research questions and propositions:

- What are the interaction and communication dynamics between stakeholders in the process of place branding?
    - How and to which extent do stakeholders engage in place branding processes?
- To what extent do stakeholders collaborate in their attempts to brand places? How can we operationalise participation in place branding processes?
    - Under which conditions is participation effective and legitimate in place branding processes?

[2] By uniting participants with different backgrounds around a discussion on their relationship dynamics the potential of an alternative network governance arrangement is tested. Participants are invited to come together to collectively come up with solutions through collaborations, a model of organically originated or emergent policy network that differs from existing hierarchical governance arrangements, characterised by a lack of common understanding and deliberation, as well as participation (Attride-Stirling 2001).

- Do policy networks provide legitimate and effective governance arrangements for participatory place branding?
    - Are participant-governed policy networks inclusive, participatory and effective governance arrangements to brand places?

Following the lines of enquiry stated in the research questions, I scrutinise the place branding process in action to better understand the underlying interactional and communication dynamics and relationships among stakeholders in the process of place branding, particularly at a regional level. I aim to contribute to the scholarly debate in the newly emerged academic field of place branding by identifying the issues affecting stakeholder engagement and scoping the potential for policy networks as superior network governance arrangements to operationalise participatory place branding processes. In this research I also aim to provide tangible methodologies and tools for practitioners to develop sustainable and ethical place branding models. Finally, in this research I seeks to gain insights into the potential for participatory action research not only as a legitimate research approach for place branding, but also as a mechanism to empower stakeholder collaboration towards collective impact and change towards participatory place branding processes.

1.3 Structure of the dissertation

The research and analysis is divided in three parts. Part I '*Place Branding 2.0: A Network Approach to Communicating "Place" in the Public Sphere*' provides a critical review of the literature on place branding (Chapters Two and Three) emphasising the instrumentality of traditional hierarchical models of place branding processes characterized by a lack of holistic stakeholder engagement. I focus on the complexity of place identities, and draw on relational aspects of place brands, as well as reviewing the co-creation process of place identities to argue the need to further develop holistic and participatory place branding processes through a review of participatory network governance models (Chapters Three and Four). Subsequently I present my arguments in favour of the development of network governance models to support greater engagement in place branding processes and provide a detailed review of policy networks as alternative governance arrangements for participatory place branding practices (Chapter Four).

In Part II 'Investigating an Alternative Participant-Governed Network Approach: A Case Study of Tasmania' I present my research design (Chapter Five). In this part I explore the use of participatory action research and the method of sociological intervention to explore stakeholder interactions and test the applicability of policy networks as superior governance arrangements to operationalize place branding processes through a series of interviews and focus group discussions. Secondly I appraise the historical background and provide a review of the case under study, Tasmania (Chapter Six). An account of the particularities of the Tasmanian branding model is supported by participants' accounts showcased as extracts from the interviews and focus group interventions transcripts, alongside a review of evidence of public, private and civil society attempts to Brand Tasmania. The review forms the context for the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews and interventions (Chapter Seven). Lastly, in Part III 'Environmental Conditions for an Inclusive Network Model of Participatory Place Branding' I present a discussion of my findings (Chapter Eight). In this last part I focus on the issues affecting stakeholder interactions, and the impediments to the operationalisation of place branding practices. An acknowledgement of the complexity and power-dynamics underlying the development of ethical and democratic participatory processes is followed by an outline of the necessary conditions for stakeholder participation and an analysis of the potential applicability of policy networks as adaptive and flexible arrangements to support the place branding process. Chapter Eight concludes by acknowledging the limitations associated to the single case study and arguing for further research on policy networks as alternative governance arrangements for participatory place branding. Similarly, in Chapter Eight I discuss how participatory action research and in particular, the method of SI, constitute exciting research avenues towards the operationalisation of participatory place branding process. I finish with a final summary of conclusions highlighting the challenges to participation in place branding and supporting policy networks as alternative and inclusive governance models for place branding (Chapter Nine).

PART I

PLACE BRANDING 2.0: A NETWORK APPROACH TO COMMUNICATING 'PLACE' IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUALISING PLACE BRANDING

No place, it seems, can now think of surviving, let alone prospering, unless it knows how to wield the weapons of business.

(Anholt 2010, p. 3)

2.1 Overview

National, regional and city governments are increasingly turning to the corporate principles of marketing and branding to support place management and economic development in a highly hyper connected and increasingly competitive global marketplace (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). The objective is to enhance a positive image and reputation for a place based on highlighting its competitive advantage (Jaffe & Nebenzahl 2001; Papadopoulos 2004). The application of corporate concepts to places, however, has proven challenging due to the dynamic and complex nature of territorial entities as socially constructed identities (Govers & Go 2016; Massey 1994; Pike 2011). Since places are not products, their identities, images and reputations cannot be simply artificially manufactured or altered. They are either already existing, co-created or reinvented through communicative social interactions between residents and other place consumers (Campelo 2015). In addition, the management of identities, images or reputations of places is currently challenged by the changes in communication patterns and the rise of the network society. As a consequence of the latest advancements in information and communication technologies (ICT) (Castells 2007), the multi-vocal nature of the place construct needs to be observed. It is in recognition of the complex debate on the conceptualisation of space and place that geographer David Harvey argues, 'place has to be one of the most multi-layered and multipurpose keywords in our language' (1996, p. 208).[3]

This chapter sets out the context in which the establishing field of place branding has emerged, and its instrumental nature as a tool to support national, regional and urban economic development. It observes how the process has been informed by discourses from the disciplines of marketing, public diplomacy, urban planning and tourism (destination management) as well as those engaging in a critique of the disconnection between branding products and the application of branding practices to places.

The chapter examines the complexity of place branding through a critical review of the lack of integration of concepts and clear conceptual framework. It focuses on the inherent differences between branded products and branded places, based on their functional and representational

[3] For a detailed review of the concepts of space and place and the phrase 'sense of place', or to refer to the unique characters of place that are part of individual identities that in turn form place identities, see, for instance, Kalandides and Kavaratzis (2011), Massey (1994, 2007) and Teather (1999). For a review of the many layers of place identity from cultural studies and cultural geography perspectives, see, for instance, Mayes (2008).

attributes, or 'hard' and 'soft' factors determining their attractiveness or perceptions in the minds of consumers (Giovanardi 2012). This review then situates place branding in a broader analytical context by observing how meaning about place is formally constructed. The process typically follows a top-down approach to managing the image and reputation of places, mainly led by governments, business and tourism organisations, that is heavily influenced by discourses of globalisation and economic development. The core argument of this chapter is that these practices are often in conflict with bottom-up or organically emergent networks of associations of meaning about places, that can influence formal place branding practices and strategies through counter-narratives and contested messages. The power of brands to communicate certain aspects of place is evidenced by Lury's observation of brands as 'boundary objects', and her statement that 'place branding does not just describe places in an already given territory but introduces potential by inserting the brand's own dimensions into the representational space between where a place is and where it might be' (2011a, p. 52). Brands have spread from consumer marketing to management and politics (Van Ham 2008) both as a 'platform for action' (Lury 2004, p. 1) and 'mediatic spaces' (Arvidsson 2005, p. 238) affecting consumption and identity production in post-modern social relations marked by co-operation and self-organisation (Appadurai 2002). Beyond a re-branding exercise, place branding needs to be observed as a form of social and political organisation.

2.2 Place branding as a tool for economic development in a globalised world

The post-Cold War era saw growth of international trade, the rapid expansion of tourism and an increasing need for countries to attract investment to assist the transformation of post-industrial urban areas (Hankinson 2010a; Ward 1998). Places now compete for investment, tourism, skilled migrants and economic and political power (Hanna & Rowley 2008; Papadopoulos 2011), and they increasingly engage in branding activities to promote local competitiveness (Boisen et al 2011; Van Ham 2008). The effects of economic globalisation (Beck 2000; Levitt 1983) and the subsequent increase in competition for economic resources has led to the application of corporate principles of marketing and branding from products and services to places (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005) to effect positive images or reputations (Anholt 2010).[4] This is echoed in place branding practice, where 'the processes, techniques and tools [of place branding] apply whether it is an overarching brand or for tourism economic development' (Baker 2007, p. 10).

[4] Globalisation in this context is understood as 'a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power' (Held et al 1999, p. 16).

In the 1970s, following the development of the modern practice of branding (Gardner & Levy 1955; Low & Fullerton 1994; Ries & Trout 1981), a body of literature on place promotion or place selling began to emerge primarily in the urban policy and tourism domains. The approach was based on the application of marketing principles to the communication and advertising of places in order to identify and differentiate them (Ashworth & Voogd 1990; Gold & Ward 1994). Having realised that marketing communication techniques alone could not alter the reputation of places, scholars advocated for a mixed approach, in which place branding was conceived as a long-term endeavour, supported by and supportive of brand management, trade, investment, tourism and export promotion (Anholt 2007; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). The following paragraphs observe the motivations for managing place identities, images or reputations following a historical account of the formation and development of the multidisciplinary field of place branding.

2.2.1 Motivations, competition and the neoliberal discourse of place branding

In Europe, there are more than 500 regions and 100,000 different kinds of communities competing individually for the same jobs, investments and talented experts.

(Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, p. 3)

The current environment of economic competition has boosted marketers' enthusiasm and support for the development of places as brands (Zenker et al 2013), and the use of place branding as 'the most effective way of altering these [place images] if they are perceived negatively by potential or existing place users' (Medway et al 2015, p. 65).[5] Since marketers now increasingly work alongside governments in economic development departments, the marketing and branding of places has gradually gained prominence in contemporary policy agendas (Baker 2012; Boisen et al 2011). Although place branding practices preceded academic debate, the last two decades have witnessed an establishment of the discipline constantly enriched by its interactions with other disciplines, such as governance, communications and cultural studies (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Lucarelli & Berg 2011). The establishment of the journal *Place Branding* in 2002 signified the first attempt to establish the research field of place branding. In its first edition, David Gertner, despite being one of the critical academic voices in the field, recognised the necessity to summon efforts to conceptualise the field, since 'in such a fiercely competitive environment, a vast number of places have already realized the inevitability of the adoption of place branding and marketing concepts' (Gertner 2004, p. 16).

[5] The images of places can be understood as the sum of associations with the arts, historical features and media accounts that emerge organically from the place. For more information and examples see, Hankinson (2010b).

In their foundational stage, place branding practice and academic research, influenced by the discourse of global competition, were concerned with short-term achievement of competitive advantage for economic outcomes (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). The influence of the dominant neoliberal discourse in the formation of place branding concepts is particularly relevant to the sub-field of *nation branding*. In this context Anholt developed the term ‘competitive identity’ to refer to place brand management and promotion to strengthen the positioning of nations in the global marketplace through strong and positive images and reputations (2007, 2010).[6] The main argument here is that territories of all sizes compete against other places and organisations for ‘attention’, or to attract consumers to experience, visit, live or buy place-related products and services (Baker 2012; Hanna & Rowley 2011). The experiences and interests that consumers look for lead to different focuses and targeting in place branding practices (Hospers 2011).[7] Branding for different purposes translated into different approaches, such as destination branding in the tourism field, country-of-origin branding to assist the positioning of places’ products, and administrative-based territorial varieties such as nation, region or city branding (Gertner 2011a; Papadopoulos & Heslop 2000). The dominant focus on the economic logic underlying these practices, however, risks commodifying other aspects of place identities, such as social and cultural facets (Jansen 2008; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2015; Sevin 2011). Such processes of commodification of brands are now evident across the globe in place branding practices of both developing and developed countries (Anholt 2009; Lucarelli & Giovanardi 2016; Papadopoulos 2004).

The competitive nature of globalisation has also had implications for urban planning and urban policy. The different motivations for affecting a positive image of a place in the mind of consumers include the promotion of a post-industrial image (as evidenced by the city of Glasgow, Scotland); the rehabilitation, reconstruction and building of urban sections (such as the Haifa Mall in Israel); and attempts to boost nation building or acquiring national status (such as hosting the Olympic Games) (Avraham & Ketter 2008). Other motivations include attracting talent or the ‘creative class’ (Florida 2014; Zenker 2009), boosting tourism (Morgan & Pritchard 2002) and more broadly, increasing investment to contribute to the economic development of places (Papadopoulos 2004). Under this paradigm, cities, beyond production centres, are places for creativity and consumption presented as liveable entities made of both social and cultural realities

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[6] ‘In short, nobody doubts that places have their brand images, and that those images are critical to their success in the global contest […] It’s only when people start talking about *branding* rather than just *brand* that the problems start. […] Of course the reality is more complex: national images are not created through communications, and cannot be altered by communications’ (Anholt 2008b, p.2). For a detailed review of the concepts of place branding and competitive identity see Anholt (2007).

[7] Hospers (2004) provides a typology of place consumers divided into residents, business and visitors.

(Lash & Urry 1994; Florida 2002). Places with strong and dynamic brands are considered to be more likely to attract creative and knowledge industries (Florida 2002; Jansson & Power 2006). This is often done through strategic communication campaigns, events or mega-events, or through the development of iconic infrastructure and buildings (Ashworth 2009; Florek 2009; Kavaratzis 2005; Pasquinelli 2013; Zhang & Zhao 2009).

Place branding is then rooted in neoliberal ideology and concepts (Gertner 2007; Kaneva 2011b) since 'small pre-existing geographical differences, be it in natural resources or socially constructed endowments, get magnified and consolidated rather than eroded by free market competition' (Harvey 2006, p. 98). The potential of place branding 'to maximise the efficient social and economic functioning of the area concerned, in accordance with whatever wider goals have been established' (Ashworth & Voogd 1990, p. 11) has been both praised and criticised in the literature (Anholt 2007; Braun 2008; Hankinson 2004; Lucarelli & Berg 2011).[8] The role of place branding as a tool for economic development is widely debated and I argue in this sense that place branding is often the result of accidental or unplanned actions (Endzina & Luneva 2004).

The process of place branding has policy implications across many areas (Ashworth 2009; Eshuis et al 2013; Eshuis & Edwards 2013; Hospers 2010; Pasquinelli 2010). Place branding is a political process, but is 'increasingly unrealistic or at least partially misleading in the network-like co-opetitive scenario of today' (Bellini 2004; Bellini et al 2010, p. 91).[9] The move from competition to cooperation is evidenced by Pasquinelli's introduction of the concept of 'co-opetition' in regional development and her understanding of network branding as a 'process establishing a reputation, that is, an enduring perception of the network and its territorial partners and turning the network into an organisational identity', based on a 'co-opetitive rationale for economic development' (2015, p. 39). Kavaratzis (2010) equally concludes that branding is a tool for strategic place development when understood not as a means for communicating positive images, but as a response to the challenges places face. In this sense, place branding can also be a tool for building communities (Therkelsen et al 2010).[10] The role of place branding, I argue, goes beyond a tool for promotion since it extends to strategic place development, aimed at both

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[8] The focus on efficiency over empowerment has been criticised in the literature on participation (Cleaver 2004, p. 275). This will be further discussed in Chapter Four with the concept of citizen participation.

[9] For more details on the concept of co-opetition through networks branding as a broad set of collaborative strategies to foster regional development, and the political aspects of brands in regional development, see Bellini et al (2010) and Pasquinelli (2015).

[10] Therkelsen et al (2010) develop a theoretical framework based on marketing, urban studies and policy studies to argue that place branding is a means to 'making' as opposed to 'marketing' places. Thus, they reflect on community building from a combination of urban sociology and urban planning approaches to suggest an institutionalist approach to place branding (as a public policy process) based on legitimising the need to include public, private and citizens' interests in the three phases of the branding process, namely: agenda setting, design and implementation.

responding to the challenges places face, while also developing and strengthening the place community.

2.2.2 Governments and place-making: from place manager to place marketer

Government officials, policymakers and various commercial and non-commercial stakeholders are becoming confident that a coherent, strong and attractive place brand will help promote the economic development of their city, region and/or country.

(Boisen et al 2011, p. 136)

The neoliberal discourse of competitiveness has affected policymaking for place development. Governments now join forces with local stakeholders to attract investors and boost competitiveness through 'marketing-driven spatial strategies' (Boisen et al 2011, p. 136).[11] For instance, mega-events, such as the World Exposition and the Olympic Games represent marketing opportunities and develop local pride through nation-building (Gilmore 2002; Heslop et al 2010; Jansen 2008; Zhan & Zhao 2009).

The discipline of place marketing initially approached the task of branding places from a demand-driven approach (Kotler et al 1993), in which the goal was to *add value* to the place by affecting positively the perceived images of places in the minds of both internal and external publics (Kavaratzis 2004; Anholt 2007; Govers & Go 2009). Assisted by marketers in the development of place branding strategies, governments, often through their tourism and economic development offices, applied a top-down approach developing and managing place brands to entice potential consumers through the creation of positive associations in the minds of consumers (Ashworth 2008).[12] This approach consisted of the designation of a brand essence or identity, and the formulation of strategies to communicate and promote the values contained in the brand essence through marketing and branding communication techniques (Anholt 2005; De Chernatony 2001, 2008; Kotler & Gertner 2002). Decision-making on place brand development and management rested primarily in government and business stakeholders, and quite often neglected the role of the local community (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Braun et al 2013). This approach serves particular interests and is instrumental since it fails to promote 'authenticity, recognition, acceptance and commitment by the local community' (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 918). In the view of the latter, the true essence of the place resides, rather, in its society (Aronczyk 2008).

[11] For a critical review of competition between places and the selective nature of place branding based on market segmentation to serve specific purposes see Boisen et al (2011).

[12] Product branding concepts of brand identity, brand positioning and brand image (Ashworth 2008), however were not familiar in the minds of politicians or public servants. Nonetheless, governments as public administrators seem to be the only institutions with enough perceived power to manage, control and monitor brand images (Eshuis & Klijn 2012).

In practice, as explored in Chapter Four, governments have now realised the need for greater stakeholder engagement to develop and promote place identity (Beckmann & Zenker 2012; Houghton & Stevens 2011; Van Dijk & Holstein 2007). Governments are thus cooperating with a range of non-state actors other than businesses, including private, not-for-profit and civil society, to more holistically develop place brands that support economic, social and community development policies (Boisen et al 2011; Colomb & Kalandides 2010; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008).[13]

2.3 Conceptualising place branding

> *Place branding has been defined as the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, social, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries.*
>
> *(Bellini et al 2000, p. 90)*

Place branding is an establishing multidisciplinary discipline drawing primarily from the mainstream marketing and branding literatures, and informed by alternative perspectives from a range of disciplines, including economics, foreign policy, geography, management, organisational behaviour, public diplomacy, public policy, tourism and urban studies, among others (Anholt 2008ab; Lucarelli & Brorström 2013).[14] Despite several attempts to conceptualise the field, its multidisciplinary nature, coupled with the complexity of the socially constructed place concept have challenged the development of a unified conceptual framework (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Ashworth & Voogd 1994).

The rapid development and establishment of the field of place branding in the late 1980s took place predominantly in the fields of marketing, urban studies, tourism and geography (Kavaratzis 2005; Lucarelli & Berg 2011; Pike 2009).[15] Originally working in isolation, early research, predominantly in the fields of urban policy and tourism, started to incorporate mainstream branding and multidisciplinary approaches. With a range of articles increasingly featured in marketing journals shifted attention from destination marketing and urban development to business and marketing (Hankinson 2015; Hanna & Rowley 2008). In the early 1990s a debate emerged on the impossibility to brand or re-brand complex political place entities, such as nations (Kotler et al 1993; Olins 2002). Concurrently, place branding and place marketing started to gain

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[13] In their role as service providers, as well as place managers, governments employ a range of different frameworks to cooperate with non-government actors, such as, Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP). For more details, see Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2008), Eshuis and Edwards (2013), Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005), and Szondi (2008).

[14] The many layers of places as both dynamic constructs and spatial identities are explored in Chapter Three. For an analysis of the different perspectives on place branding, see Lucarelli and Brorström (2013).

[15] For a detailed overview of the origins of place branding see Ward (1998).

traction as managerial techniques adopted by territorial administrations in practice (Gertner, 2011a).

In recognition of the complexity of the place construct, a more holistic approach has since then emerged, resulting in the formation of several schools of thought, and prompting an increase of relations and collaboration between disciplines (Olins 2004). To date, scholars are still in search of a shared conceptual framework that would help advance the field further (Anholt 2007; Hankinson 2015; Kaneva 2011; Kavaratzis 2009), and continue to develop new research agendas (Dinnie 2009; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008; Hankinson 2010a; Pike 2009) along with critical viewpoints (Gertner 2011a,b).[16]

Although place branding has been gaining momentum (Lucarelli & Berg 2011), the general lack of commonly agreed theoretical foundations hinders the clarification of key concepts such as place identity (Kalandides 2011b; Kavarazis & Hatch 2012). Similarly, there are questions around the role of place culture in the place branding processes (Mayes 2008; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2015) or around brand ownership, leadership and legitimacy (Hankinson 2009). Although it is not the aim of this dissertation to provide a detailed account of the problematic issue of the coexistence of several place branding frameworks informed by several disciplines, it is important to observe the key differences to reflect on their effects on stakeholder engagement at an organisational, structural and practical level. A multidisciplinary review of the application of branding concepts to place and the key concepts of brand, place brand, place identity, place image and place reputation is included below.[17]

2.3.1 Branding products

In the late 1800s the United States saw the emergence of a trend to establish product brands as distinctive identities supporting product promotion (Low & Fullerton 1994). The transition from the promotion of purely functional aspects of a product to symbolic images, however, eventuated in the 1950s, at the time when Gardner and Levy argued that a brand name is ‘a complex symbol that represent a variety of ideas and attributes… it has built up and acquired as a public object over a period of time’ (1955, p. 35). The conception of products as symbolic brands led to the birth of brands as complex symbols that create associations (that might in turn translate into positive feelings or emotions) in the minds of consumers (Hankinson 2004; Kalandides 2011ab).

[16] In order to resolve some of the issues around conceptualisation in the field of place branding and advance theory, Gertner (2011a) presented an exhaustive account of the evolution of the fields of place branding and place marketing from 1990-2009 through a meta-analysis of the literature.

[17] Similarly, the following account of the developments in the fields of marketing and branding, although not exhaustive, aims at situating the context in which the practice and field of place branding emerged in order to situate practices and issues. For an in-depth review, see Hankinson (2010b, pp. 22-42).

Subsequently, the American Marketing Association (1960) defined brand as '[a] name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors', recognising brands as powerful symbols that create unique associations and selling propositions in the minds of consumers (Keller 1993; Lury 2009; Ries & Trout 1981). Brands were then defined as 'an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant unique added values which match their needs most closely' (De Chernatony & McDonald 1994, p.18). Places were then included in the branding literature, and the term umbrella brand was introduced, based on provenance associations (Hall 2004; Iversen & Hem 2008). The next section observes the establishment of place branding as a practical tool and academic field.

2.3.2 Branding places

Considering (à la Harvey) all aspects of place and their interrelations is of the utmost importance for place branding.

(Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015, p. 1,373)

Although early literature in place branding appeared primarily in the urban policy and tourism domains and focused on 'place promotion' or 'place selling' (Ashworth & Voogd 1990; Gold & Ward 1994), scholars have suggested that place branding practices, in any of their forms (city, region, nation) existed before formal attempts to theorise and conceptualise the field (Olins 2002; Dinnie 2004; Papadopoulos 2004). Research on place image promotion was followed by an emphasis on place branding in the mainstream branding literature (Hankinson 2001, 2004, 2005, 2010a,b; Kotler, Rein & Haider 1993; Morgan & Pritchard 2002). The concept of 'brand image' was primarily developed in the tourism domain, in which the sale of tourism products and services is based on positive or attractive 'destination images' (Pike 2002). Place branding is the result of several convergent disciplines and domains, and its establishment as a discipline was evidenced by the emergence of the *Journal of Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* in 2004, followed by the publication of the *Journal of Place Management and Development* as an alternative forum (Gertner 2011a).[18]

A discussion around the development and management of place images and brands was situated primarily in the fields of urban policy and place management, and its main objective was to support the economic revitalisation of places (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008). Since the late 1990s, academics and practitioners have increasingly engaged in multidisciplinary debate about

[18] These journals became a forum for contributions of both practitioners and scholars in the fields of place branding and place marketing from a wide range of disciplines, including political science, public diplomacy, marketing, geography and urban planning. For a detailed account, see Gertner (2011b).

applying marketing and branding theories to places (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Anholt 2005, 2007; Gnoth 2002; Hall 1999; Kotler & Gertner 2002; Morgan et al 2002; Papadopoulos & Heslop 2002). As a result, the development and establishment of place branding have been accompanied by several attempts from other disciplines to conceptualise place marketing and place branding, and to understand how foreign and domestic publics interact to create and communicate meaning about a place (Braun 2008; Cull 2009; Kavaratzis 2012; Papadopoulos 2004; Szondi 2008).

The advancements in branding theory and subsequent conceptualisation of brands as corporate assets (Doyle 1989; Hankinson 2010) led to the development of the concept of place *brands* (see for instance Dinnie 2004; Hankinson 2004; Iversen & Hem 2008; Kotler & Gertner 2002; Morgan et al 2003). This led to the subsequent application of other marketing concepts such as *brand equity* or 'the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand' (Keller 1993, p. 1), and management concepts such as *strategic brand management* (Keller 2003; Hanna & Rowley 2011), and *brand architecture* to the management of the brand portfolios of places (Aaker & Joachimstaler 2012; Hanna & Rowley 2015).[19]

In addition, several elements of place brands were identified: the identity, or reality of the place; the image, or the perception of the place; and the brand or how the place wishes to be perceived (Hospers 2004). Subsequently, Hanna & Rowley (2011) summarised their review of existing models to suggest a holistic model to support practice, emphasising the importance of stakeholder management and engagement, as well as stakeholder relationships and leadership (see Figure 1):

[19] Hanna and Rowley (2015) further developed this model into the 'Place Web Model' based on brand architecture as a compound of existing place brands.

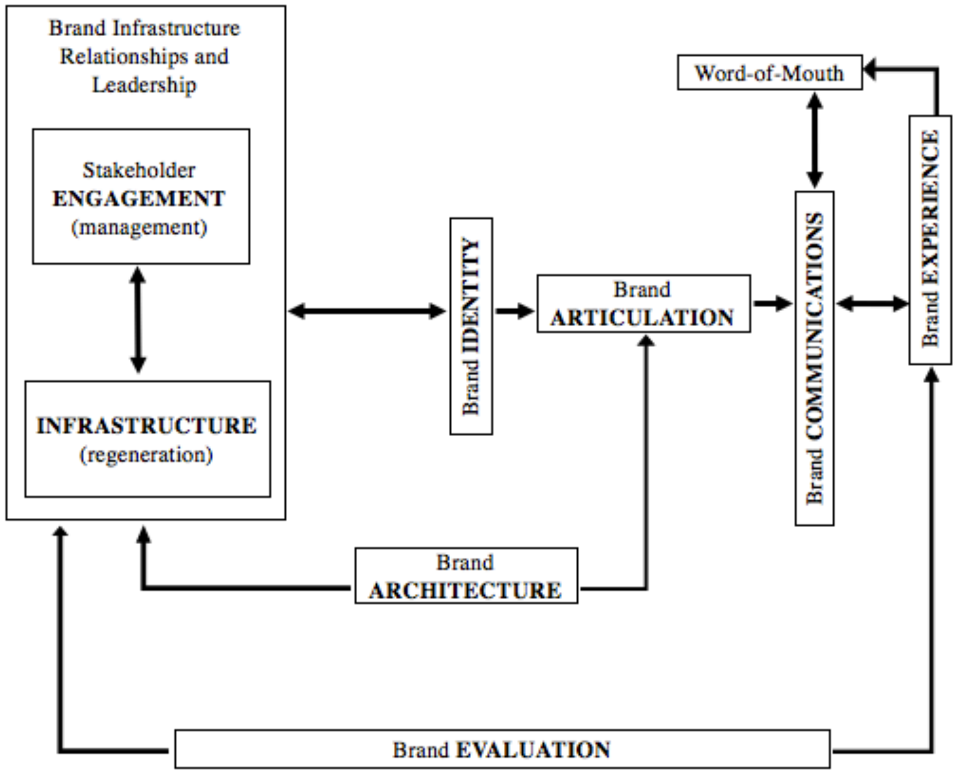

Figure 1. Strategic Brand Management Model. Figure adapted from Hanna and Rowley (2011, p. 463).

2.3.3 Place brand identity, image and reputation

Identity is a relational construct formed in interaction with others.

(Hatch & Schultz 2002, p. 992)

Although the notion of brand identity is further explored in Chapter Three, it is important to note the distinction between the concepts of brand image and identity, and reputation (Govers & Go 2009; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). Image and identity are key concepts in place marketing (Hubbard & Hall 1996; Kotler et al 1999; Short & Kim 1998). In corporate communications, for instance, image is defined as 'the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge, and impressions that each stakeholder has about an organisation', while 'corporate identity resides in the organisation, corporate image resides in the heads of the stakeholders' (Melewar 2003, p. 214). The application of marketing and branding principles to places led to the emergence of the concept of place image, since 'a place can only be commodified […] by means of a rigorous selection from its many characteristics' (Ashworth & Voogd 1990, p.77; Kotler & Gernter 2002; Rainisto 2003; Van Ham 2008). Places were starting to be conceived as centres of both production and consumption, and their identities were reimagined in the form of 'place images' (Hubbard, 1996; Short et al 1993). Thus, 'the question arises of how to most effectively represent such complex phenomena as places, which may be diffuse, complex and vaguely defined' (Roberts 2012, p. 206).[20] Different conceptualisations of place brand have, since then, sprouted. Despite the common understanding that places could capitalise on positive images and reputations (Anholt & Hildreth 2005), scholars strive to provide a more sophisticated understanding of how place brands are constructed through multidisciplinary approaches that bring greater geographical perspective of the differences of the branded objects (territories), as well as further insights into how associations by internal and external publics (or stakeholders) interact to form place brands.[21]

In public diplomacy, place brand image is defined as 'the perception of the brand that exists in the mind of the consumers or audience' (Anholt 2007, p. 5). Brand image is then understood as a set or network of associations fuelled by continuous interactions and relationships of the production of meaning about place by both internal and external audiences, that include locals, brand managers and consumers of place (Anholt 2010; Go & Govers 2010; Zenker & Beckmann 2013).[22] There are, however, alternative conceptualisations of the elements that form place brands. Kavaratzis and Kalandides, for instance, combine geography and marketing views, and build on urban planning expert Läpple's four elements that constitute place (namely *materiality* or physical substrate; *practices* of social interaction with physical substrate; *institutions* as mediators of the social space and practice through regulations linked to property, power and control; and *representations* or narratives about the place) to provide a (city) place brand formation framework. Kavaratzis and Kalandides' model (see Figure 2 below) is based on the associations between the physical attributes of the place and the representations of place in the minds of place consumers, that is the interactions between the abovementioned four 'co-constituents of place' (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015, p. 1,374):

[20] In her study of the concept of place as a cultural construct, Roberts emphasises the selective nature of place marketing, emerging from the commodification of elements drawn from a more holistic entity which is place. Roberts cites Ashworth and Voogd's conceptualisation of place as 'aggregations of many varied features and facilities'. For a detailed review of the several layers mapping the cultural elements of places, see Roberts (2012).
[21] Anholt and Hildreth, in their review of Brand America, argue that a brand is 'nothing more and nothing less than the good name of something that's on offer to the public' (2005, p. 165).
[22] For a review of the pitfalls associated with the static articulations of identity to differentiate urban territories, see Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005).

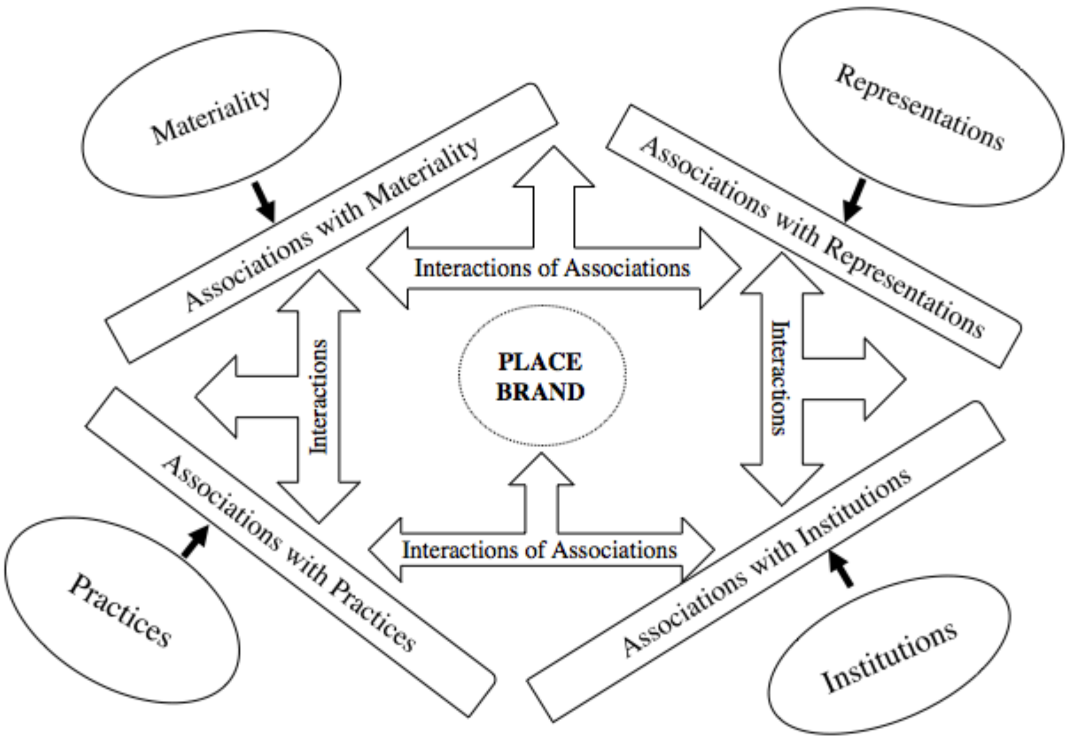

Figure 2. Place Brand Formation Process. Adapted from Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015, p. 1,376).

Similarly, in their study of corporate brand identities as dynamic constructs, Da Silveira et al (2012) also emphasise the need to observe the interactions between brand managers and consumers (internal and external) in the co-creation process and note the unclear intersection between the concept of brand identity and related notions of personality, image, reputation and positioning.[23] The gaps between image and reputation have also been observed by de Chernatony (1999) in the context of brand management, emphasising the ethos that differentiates the brand (identity) and the impression (or positioning) of brands, and Aaker (1997) defines brand identity as the vision and culture of an organisation, and image as its positioning, personality and relationships and representations.[24] Whilst brand image focuses on impressions by consumers, brand reputation focuses on perceptions by internal and external stakeholders, and brand personality refers to the organisations culture and relationships.

[23] In their analysis, Da Silveira et al build on De Chernatony (2010) to argue that brand identity and brand reputation are interlinked, since brand identity is the basis for brand reputation, which in turn helps develop brand identity. These concepts, however, are separated from the concept of brand image, conceived as the interpretation of brand identity, building on Kapferer (2012). See Da Silveira et al (2012) for a review of brand identity and other related branding concepts.

[24] 'Brands satisfy functional and emotional needs' (De Chernatony 1999, p.158). 'Identity is about the ethos, aims and values that present a sense of individuality differentiating the brand while image is the holistic impression of the relative position of brand among its perceived competition (ibid, p.165).

The sections to follow observe the different aspects of the complex construct of place brand, emphasizing the diverse and dynamic nature of places in relation to the interactions between the different stakeholders that collectively develop, shape and support the place identity, image and reputation.

2.3.4 Brand equity and competitive identity

Scholars' interest in measuring the success of place branding strategies has sparked a fascinating debate over whether place branding can indeed support place development and what does it mean (Dinnie 2015; Gernter 2007; Papadopoulos 2004). Place brand performance has therefore been a key and contested issue in the place branding literature (Kavaratzis 2005; Keller 1993, 2003; Konecnik & Gartner 2007; Pike 2007, 2009). In their quest for clarity in the development of conceptual frameworks, scholars have also been particularly concerned with quantifying the reputations of places, that is assessing how they compare to other territories. This concern led to the establishment of the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index^{SM} (NBI^{SM}) that 'helps governments, organizations and businesses understand, measure and ultimately build a strong national image and reputation. The index measures the power and quality of each country's "brand image"' (NBI^{SM} 2016) and ranks nations based on six main areas, namely: governance, people, exports, culture and heritage, tourism, investment and migration (Anholt 2000, see Figure 3 below). The index has applications for national governments and agencies and it is used to develop brand strategy, particularly around public diplomacy, investment, export and tourism promotion, cultural and economic development.

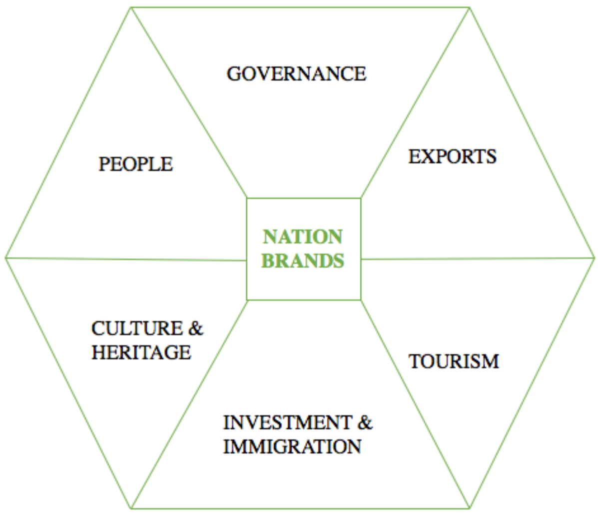

Figure 3. The Nation Brand Hexagon. Adapted from Anholt (2000).[25]

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[25] Other indexes include the Anholt-GMI City Brands Index and the Saffron European City Brand Barometer. See <http://www.saffron-consultants.com/insights/6086/> and <www.gfk.com>.

If place brands are understood as commercial tools for place development, the value of such brands needs to be taken into consideration (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015). Although research in this area is scarce, the evaluation of destination brands, through a consumer-based approach including residents' satisfaction, offers the most advanced framework for evaluation of place brand equity (Florek 2015).[26] However, the concept of brand equity has proven elusive (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). To the evident difficulty of aggregating measures responding to the diverse interests of the different stakeholders involved, other factors such as political instability, can also affect the success of place branding strategies (Hankinson 2015). Calls for research in this area range from greater use of marketing key performance indicators, changes in perceptions, citizen satisfaction, business competitiveness and financial returns (Dinnie 2009; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Pike 2009). It is in this light that Zenker and Beckmann (2013b) suggested a framework to measure brand image effects of flagship developments in cities, although its application beyond urban development is compromised.[27] Other models include Florek's (2012) framework of city brand equity based on the perception, preference, satisfaction and attachment dimensions; Jacobsen's (2009) investor-based place brand equity that observes the value of brands from their capacity to attract potential investors; Lucarelli's (2012) model of city brand equity as a sum of tangible and intangible elements, based on the measurement or evaluation of image and identity elements that result in social and economic impact of the branding efforts; and Pike's (2010) consumer-brand equity investigation in destination branding.[28]

The above account of the debate on place brand equity indicates that although typically the most important factors that make the rankings are attractiveness and satisfaction of residents (Freire 2009; Insch & Stuart 2015; Insch & Florek 2008; Zenker et al 2013), place marketing and branding still lack a proper measurement framework for successful practices (Zenker & Martin 2011; Zenker et al 2013).[29] The 'value of brands resides primarily in the mind of the consumer,

[26] For a detailed review of place brand equity in destination branding, see Konecnik and Gartner (2007).
[27] Examples of flagship development are the Guggenheim museum by Frank Gehry in Bilbao, Spain, as a process of reconstruction of the city. For a review and debate on the contested success on the Bilbao case, see Gomez and Gonzalez (2001) and Franklin (2016).
[28] See also Pike et al (2010). Moor and Lury (2011) also highlight competing understandings of value. In the assessment of place brand value, brand equity is only one form of valuation. Brand value can refer to a type of financial assessment of the value of the place brand as a source for competitive advantage as opposed to brand equity as consumers' and/or stakeholders' perceptions of the brand, rather than focusing on behaviours based on purchase potential to become economic value, but instead exist primarily as mental representations (Lury & Moor 2010; Moor & Lury 2011).
[29] For a detailed review of the issues around the measurement of place brands and the concept of place brand equity see Zenker and Braun (2015). In the luxury brand market, for instance, a shift from product-centred branding to service-oriented branding focusing on brand experience has centred attention on the value of co-creation in the network, where company owners, consumers and their networks all have a place (Tynan et al 2010)

not in the factory of the producer', and emotional relationships between consumers and the place product(s) are key elements of value assessment (Anholt 2004b, p. 29).[30]

2.3.5 Place brands as multi-purpose and multidimensional constructs

In spite of the existing confusion between the terms place marketing and place branding, branding is mostly situated as a subset of marketing (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Hankinson 2015).[31] Simultaneously, an alternative political view of branding as a subset of public diplomacy emerged from the fields of international relations and public relations. This perspective is concerned with the branding of nations as the logical development from traditional propaganda to the new public diplomacy, and as a tool of soft power (Anholt 2006, 2010; Cull 2016; Giovanardi 2012; Melissen 2005; Nye 2004; van Ham 2008, Zaharna 2007).[32] Place brands now find their place in the international context as a tool for public diplomacy supporting the dissemination of propaganda (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy 2000; Sevin 2011; Szondi 2008; Varga 2013; Wang 2005).

Furthermore, the current broadening of the discipline of branding has inevitably led to changes and new developments in the young discipline of place branding (Giovanardi 2011; Hankinson 2015; Skinner 2008).[33] Place brands are now conceived as multidimensional constructs. The communications-based view of place branding is challenged by the identity-based view that considers the place brand and identity of a place as interwoven (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013, p.71). This shift towards place identity acknowledges the interactions between different spheres of relationships in place branding processes and advocates for a need to further research the 'agents, relationships and interactions' (Hanna & Rowley 2011, p. 473). The identity-based view and its associations with the co-creation process of place brands are further discussed in Chapter Three.

Focusing on the interactions that form place brands, Hankinson (2004) proposed a relational approach in which place branding is described as a set of relationships with stakeholder groups that communicate the place's brand (see Figure 4 below). Hankinson viewed place branding not as a managerial process but one of co-ordination, formed by stakeholder orientations. In practice, Baker (2007) equally states that the conflicting voices of different stakeholder groups contribute to the place brand, thus conceiving brand as dialogue. Aitken & Campelo (2011) expanded this

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[30] However, a different conceptualisation based on other values that the place branding can bring about is emerging (see Chapter Four, p. 73).
[31] Similarly, Ashworth and Kavaratzis describe 'place marketing as a planning instrument' and consider place branding as a 'distinct focus within place marketing' (2010, p. 2-3).
[32] Scholars argue that public diplomacy pre-existed place branding practices as strategic and management tools to enhance the reputations of places, and disagree on the degree of similarity and interrelation between the two fields. For more information on this debate see Gilboa (2008) and Szondi (2008).
[33] For an extensive review of the link between the evolution of mainstream branding and place branding practices see Hankinson (2015).

idea further and conceived the place branding process as a *multilogue*, in which different stakeholders share different perspectives and ideas which, in turn, generate debate about the place (Houghton & Stevens 2011, pp.52).

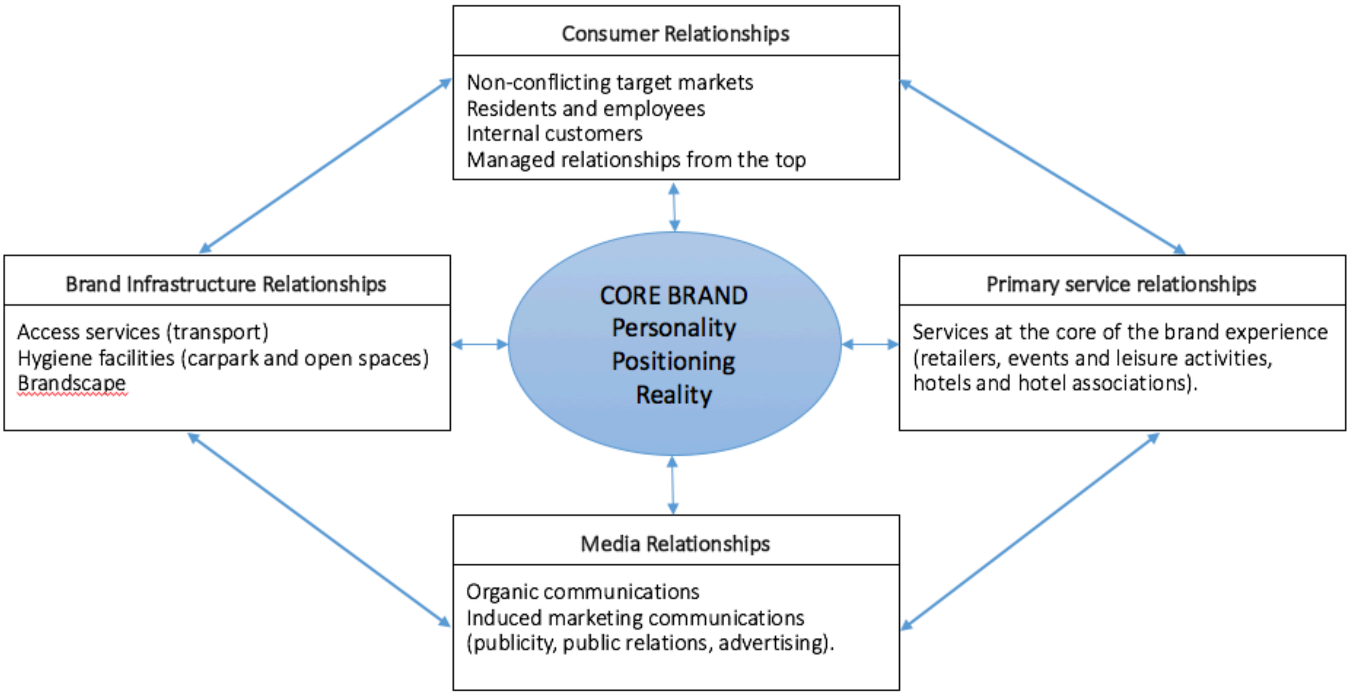

Figure 4. The Relational Network Brand Model. Adapted from Hankinson (2004, p. 115).

The relational model highlights the different aspects or factors that form the place brand process. Place brands are also understood as combinations of hard factors, or measurable aspects of territories (such as the state of their economies and infrastructure) and soft factors, relative to more dynamic aspects of place such as culture and quality of life (Kotler et al 1999; Giovanardi 2012). Place brands can encompass both the tangible and intangible based on both functional and representational aspects of place brands (Giovanardi 2012; Zenker 2011). This dichotomy recognises the key role of existing perceptions, images or mental representations of places in the minds of consumers (Kavaratzis 2004; Rainisto 2003), and suggests the need to reinterpret place branding as a dynamic and relational process (Hankinson 2015; Pasquinelli 2010; Pike 2009). In this sense, Hanna and Rowley's (2011) model of strategic brand management summarises the interactions of physical and representational aspects of places and provides a useful outline of the components of the place brand *infrastructure*, emphasising the experiential attributes that support the place brand (as seen in Figure 5):

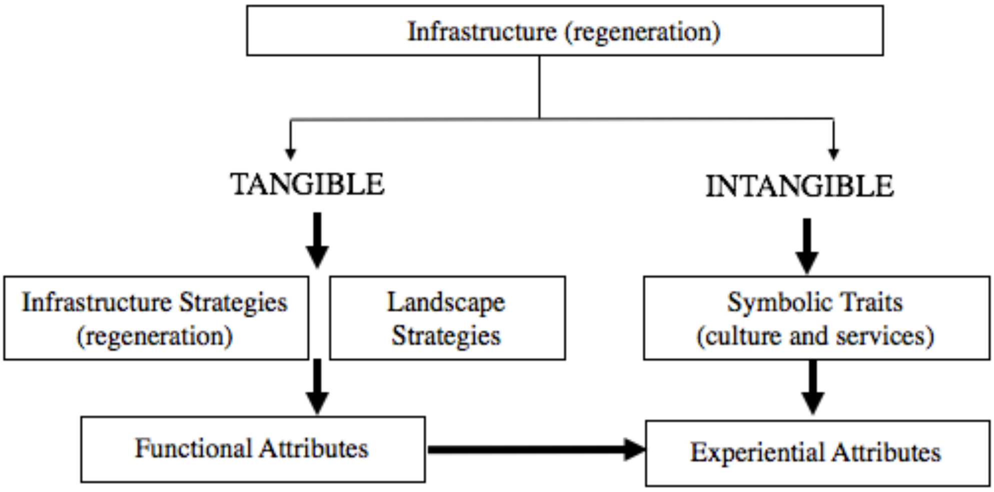

Figure 5. Strategic Brand Model. Adapted from Hanna and Rowley (2011, p. 463).

Similarly, building on the application of De Chernatony and McWilliam's 'Brand Box Model' to destinations, Caldwell and Freire (2004) argue that places as brands have two key dimensions, functionality and representationality, which affect both the values of place and perceptions of place by audiences.[34] The 'power of functional and tangible elements' needs to be observed in relation to the impact of shared place images on effective territorial governance when assessing whether the actions of places, whether intentional or non-intentional, have a communicative effect (Giovanardi 2012, p. 39-40). Kavaratzis (2005) also understands place brands as multidimensional complex entities and offers a useful distinction between three main channels for the communication of place brands, namely: the functional elements of the place, comprising public spaces and administrative and organisational structures; promotional actions, comprising advertising, PR, logos and other graphic design elements; and the media accounts. This distinction recognises the multi-vocal nature of place brands and their open character. There is a need to move away from pure marketing discourses of hard and soft factors of products (Giovanardi 2012) to observe both internal and external orientations or the multiplicity of targets

[34] Drawing on the functional, practical and utilitarian dimensions of brands versus the representational, social and value-added aspects, Caldwell and Freire (2004) also argue that regions and cities are perceived for their functional aspects, whereas the representational aspects are more evident in countries. Caldwell and Freire, however fail to consider internal audiences in their analysis (Giovanardi 2012).

of branding (Colomb & Kalandides 2010), since 'places are not designed to meet a market need in the way that new products and services are' (Hankinson 2010, p. 19).[35]

Challenging previous ideas of place brands as sets of attributes, Lichrou et al (2010) suggest that places can be interpreted as sets of meanings or narratives. Similarly, Magosse calls for a bottom up approach for city imaging that 'should allow the so-called "hidden voices" to bring in their narratives and should allow increasing the "inclusiveness" of the relevant projects' (Magosse 2005 in Braun et al 2010, p. 9). In this sense, brands are part of a consumer culture, in which consumers both seek and produce meanings that form place brand identities, since they 'manifest their particular personal and social circumstances and further their identity and lifestyle goals' through brands (Arnould & Thompson 2005, p. 871).[36] In addition to the different meanings that places have in the minds of different people, people have different interests in place (Ooi, 2004). This two-way exchange of meaning supports the thesis of co-creation of brand meanings (as further observed in Chapter Three, see Vargo & Lusch 2004; Brown et al 2006) that underlies the development of this thesis' conceptual framework.

Therkelsen et al (2010), in the context of urban branding, reflect on the phases of place branding from an institutionalist approach to public policy. Since the different dimensions of places are often linked to several avenues for communication of meaning about places by and to different stakeholders, Therkelsen et al introduce a useful distinction between 'city of words' and 'city of stones' to describe the connection between the physical aspects of place (stones) and the representation of place (words) that get communicated to potential external and internal place audiences. Through a study of the city of Aalborg, Denmark, Therkelsen et al (2010) suggest a model to guide the process of place branding that includes both external and internal audiences in which, although governments and public organisations lead the agenda setting phase, there is significant interplay between public, private and citizen's interests in the design and implementation phases of place branding (see Figure 6).

[35] Giovanardi (2012) argues that, in their understanding of places as a pure communicative approach, academics and policymakers have focused too much on the soft factors of places, such as creativity (Florida 2014), as distinctive elements and differentiating features, disregarding the physical dimensions of places.
[36] These brand narratives are sometimes arguably interpreted as part of the hedonic consumption experience that motivates consumers to buy a product, service or experience (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982).

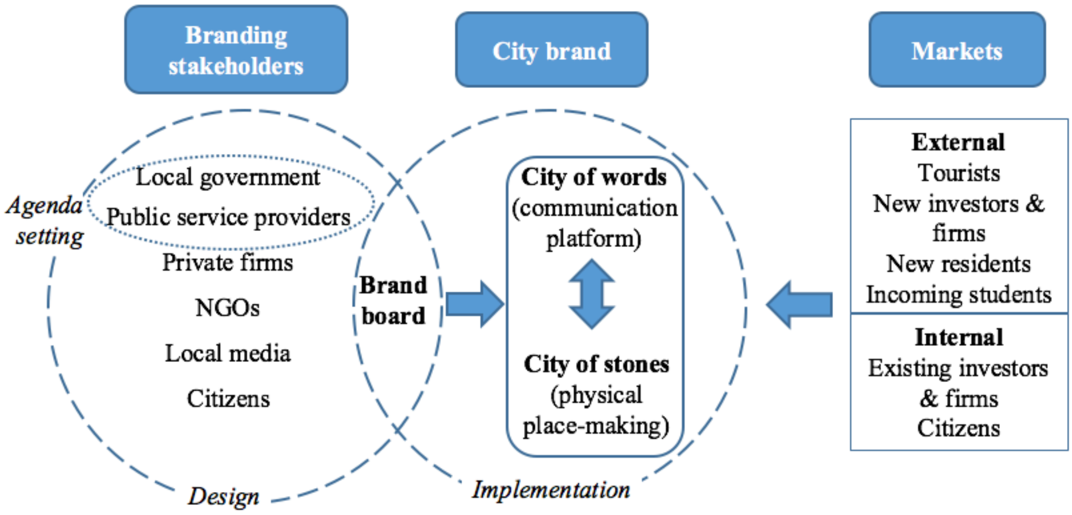

Figure 6. Place Branding Actors and Processes. Figure adapted from Therkelsen et al (2010, p. 143).

Here place is understood as a 'plethora of images and representations' (Hubbard & Hall 1998, p. 7) and place branding processes thus encompass many aspects and activities that range from simply naming geographies to holistically managing place development (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Hankinson 2004; Pike 2011).[37] The several tangible and intangible assets of a place form the symbols that are promoted at different times and often simultaneously to increase the place's competitiveness (O'Shaughnessy 1995; De Chernatony & McDonald 2003). These assets may include flagship developments in urban regeneration (Zenker & Beckmann 2013b) and landmarks of places (Kotler et al 1999).

In sum, the multidimensional character of place has resulted in place branding being envisaged in combination with other place development activities, expanding from its original role as promotional tool (Kavaratzis 2010; Therkelsen et al 2010). Arguably, this realisation acknowledges the link between place branding and public policy, and suggests a need to observe place branding governance models, since 'place branding would benefit from a much closer collaboration between place branders and the professionals in charge of delivering other types of policies' (Giovanardi 2012, p. 43). Exploring the links between place representation and other

[37] 'The name of a place provokes a set of perceptions in the mind. Associations of a place exist in the mind, in the same way that specific associations are attributed to specific commercial brands. The place name can thus be seen as a brand' (Boisen et al 2011, p. 140). Similarly, logos have symbolic value, as visual identities that assist recognition by audiences (Warnaby & Medway 2010). However, the design of logos often lacks a strong and coherent underlying branding strategy (Hankinson 2007; Zenker & Martin 2011).

place development policies, such as urban planning (Jensen 2007) and scoping the potential to build on synergies (Boisen et al 2011) is therefore key. Under this scenario, citizens, governments, public institutions and private organisations are all equally central to the development of a common purpose, or vision, supported by aligned and coherent place branding policies. Therefore, I argue that stakeholder participation and collaboration in the branding process is of utmost importance.

2.4 On the application of the place branding concept

> *[Place brands are] the totality of thoughts, feelings, and expectations that people hold about a location. It's the reputation and the enduring essence of a place and represents its distinctive promise of value, providing it with a competitive edge.*
>
> *(Baker 2012, p. 27)*

The difficulties associated with applying terminology relative to place brands and branding is evidenced by several attempts to conceptualise the field (Pike 2002, 2015; Hanna & Rowley 2008). In addition, misconceptions about place branding have affected both its role and development opportunities (Kavaratzis 2012). To date, there is no consensus on a common definition of place branding that would further the establishment of the field (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Hankinson 2004; Skinner 2008).[38]

The complexity of the brand architecture of places and the intricacies of adapting research on the consumption of goods and services to socially constructed and ever-changing territorial entities has led to the inclusion of particular understandings of branding from a plurality of disciplines from the social sciences in the place branding debate (Gertner 2011a; Medway et al 2015). Different disciplines, logically, emphasise different aspects, leading to confusion and indistinct or equivalent use of terms like 'place promotion', 'place marketing' and 'place branding' (Govers 2011; Hankinson 2010; Lucarelli & Brorström 2013).[39] As a result, a myriad of conceptual models based on different approaches to the place entity to be branded have been proposed.[40] Such models emphasise different aspects of place, ranging from stakeholder relationships, place brand perceptions, place brand image, service-dominant logic of marketing, and network governance, among others (Anholt 2010; Avraham & Ketter 2008; Beckmann & Zenker 2012;

[38] This points towards the field's heterogeneity and lack of disciplinary coherence. Although there seems to be consensus among scholars on a stronger tendency towards the application of concepts from marketing theory (Papadopoulos 2004) to the branding of places, the distinct developments of the branding paradigm in corporate branding theory, as detailed above, have added to the misunderstanding of the concepts of place brand and place branding, and the mixing of terms such as 'destination marketing', 'place marketing', 'urban marketing' and 'place promotion' (Hanna & Rowley 2008; Lucarelli & Brorström 2013).

[39] Lucarelli and Brorström (2013) argue that the lack of understanding of the marketing and branding literature by scholars from sociology, geography and political science adds to the difficulties in establishing a conceptual framework for place branding, and therefore advocate for a more holistic approach beyond the dichotomy of marketing-branding.

[40] See Lucarelli and Berg (2011) for a detailed account of conceptual models.

Bellini et al 2010; De Nisco et al 2008; Hankinson 2005; Houghton & Stevens 2011; Kavaratzis 2012; Morgan et al 2003; Pike 2002; Stubbs & Warnaby 2005; Trueman et al 2007; Warnaby 2009a; Zenker & Beckmann 2013b).[41]

Particularly relevant to the concept of co-creation of place identities is the definition of place brand as approached from a service-dominant perspective of marketing focused on brand experiences (Vargo & Lusch 2008), as the result of the 'continual process of iteration' (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 915), 'a shared reality, dynamically constructed through social interaction' (Ballantyne & Aitken 2007, p. 365).[42] Correspondingly, from an ecological perspective, places can be interpreted as brand ecosystems, and are therefore subject to political, social, geographical and environmental forces (Bergvall 2006; Giovanardi et al 2013), and these perspectives bring into question the very nature and purpose of place branding. In an attempt to clarify the theoretical framework, Anholt rejects the term 'place branding' since it implies that marketing communication techniques *can* indeed change the reputations of places (2007).[43] Furthermore, the consumer-dominant logic that resonates particularly in the destination branding scholarship defines place brands from a place as product perspective. It describes brand as '[a] network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design' (Braun & Zenker 2010, p. 5) noting 'brand perception' by potential place consumers as a key determinant of place management practice. In their model, Braun and Zenker (2010) also recognise two key elements of place, the tangible and intangible, or physical and communicative aspects of place that form place brand perception, that in turn leads to consumers' identification and satisfaction with place (see Figure 7).

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[41] For a review of the different concepts employed in the place branding literature see, for instance, Skinner (2008). For a review of the terminology employed in place branding see, Hanna and Rowley (2008). For more details on multidisciplinary approaches to place branding, see Hankinson (2010a).

[42] Chapter Three builds further on this point to consider brands as co-creation processes. For more detail on the paradigm of co-creation as a context in which place brands can exist, and in which consumption is understood as a process of constructing self-identity, see Aitken and Campelo (2011).

[43] Anholt's (2007) criticism of the concept of place branding instigated much needed debate on the necessity and true nature of place branding. Anholt's claims contradicted the views of practitioners that continued to affirm that the images of places, and by that they meant place brands, could be altered to suit consumers' needs. For instance, from a tourism or destination branding perspective, Baker (2012) argues that the brand images of places can indeed be altered, and should be altered to create positive perceptions about place, often beyond the reality of the place. Baker builds on Hildreth, head of place branding at renowned London marketing agency Saffron, when he states that 'a city's brand is an overall image and set of associations that resides in people's heads and branding means the deliberate actions taken to alter or improve an image' (ibid, p.18). Baker defends the use of branding as a strategic framework for place development and criticises those with opposing views or lacking the marketing and branding knowledge necessary to fully grasp the advantages of applying branding principles to places (ibid). Baker even suggests that the images of cities should be measured as 'assets' in governments' balance sheets, thus reinforcing a dominant neoliberal view of managing the images and reputations of places (ibid). I argue that this constitutes an instrumental approach, since it fails to consider the multiple dimensions of the place construct beyond places as products (i.e. cultural associations, local identities, and so forth), and reflects the reality of current practices, dominated by consultants or practitioners.

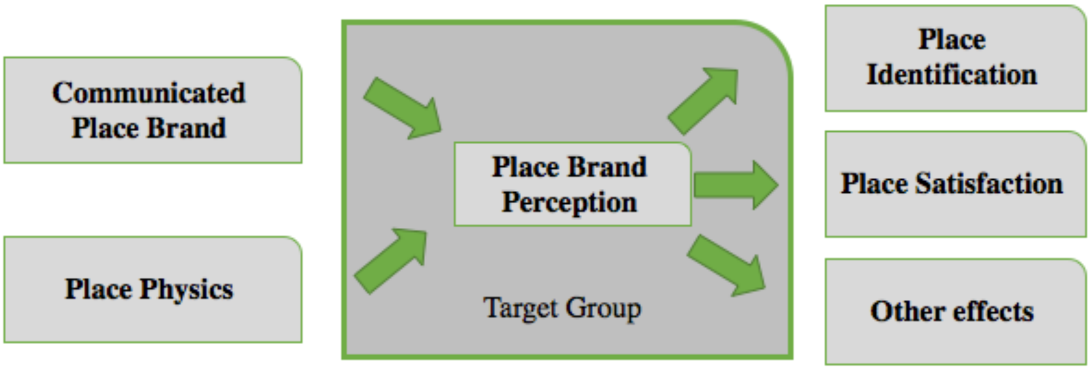

Figure 7. Place Brand Perception. Adapted from Braun and Zenker (2010, p. 5).

Arguably, Braun and Zenker failed to consider institutional and organisational frameworks underlying place branding practice, or observe places as multidisciplinary entities and homes to social and cultural communities (Low & Altman 1992).

In this section I have identified two main approaches to the promotion of places: a marketing approach focusing on promoting and selling place-branded products and services (see, for instance, Kotler et al 1993) and a branding approach based on the communication of symbolic meaning about places to create positive associations. Similarly, in this research I seek to combine political understandings of places with cultural, geographic and social conceptions to yield greater cultural, social and economic value for places. For this, I consider the physical, organisational, symbolic and representational nature of place brands (Doel & Hubbard 2002; Van den Berg and Braun 1999; Giovanardi 2012).

The growing place branding practice and the increasing research agendas emerging from different fields translated in several attempts to conceptualise place branding in the literature, towards a commonly agreed theoretical framework (Anholt 2006; Govers & Go 2009; Hankinson 2004; Hanna & Rowley 2011; Lucarelli & Berg 2011; Moilanen & Rainisto 2009). Furthermore, place branding practice has informed and shaped developments in theory.[44] The marketing of the images of places to attract visitation and sell place products was well established before academic debate on the application of marketing and branding principles to places emerged.[45] Arguably,

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[44] The literature of Country-Of-Origin (COO) or Product Country Image (PCI), for example, considers the images of places as variables in the promotion of products related to the place (for a country perspective see Kotler & Gertner (2002); and Nadeau et al (2008). 'PCI refers to the perceptions about countries with regards to purchases whose production is related to them (that is, made in, designed in, head office in, located in)' (Nadeau et al 2008, p.87).
[45] For a review of the development of the field, see Gertner (2011a). Similarly, the relationship between provenance of products and consumer behaviour is observed by Dinnie (2004), and Papadopoulos (2004). For parallel developments in destination marketing see Morgan et al (2004). For a review of the effect of 'country of origin' or 'product-county image' in products, see Papadopoulos & Heslop (2002).

the concept of place branding aligns more clearly with tourism objectives (Ashworth & Voogd 1994), since destination branding practices are often aimed at branding cities and regions as a range of products and experiences on offer (Papadopoulos & Heslop 2000).[46] When translating such concepts and practices to other industries, what is clear is that there is no one-size-fits-all approach (Baker 2007).

The pre-existence of specific branding models for different purposes, as a result of the particularities of the branded aspects of place and products, has arguably hindered the development of a common theoretical framework for place branding practices (Cai 2002; Therkelsen 2003). In light of this issue, as outlined above, Anholt attempted to further develop a holistic conceptual framework for place branding with the introduction of the term 'competitive identity' and the development of his brand hexagon model (2006, see Figure 3, p. 24). Anholt (2000) attempted to resituate the focus of the framework from branding to the development of place identity and brought attention to the importance of including civil society (internal audiences) in the governance of place branding processes[47].

Similarly, the concept of co-creation has gradually gained importance, particularly from a service-dominant logic of marketing, emphasising the role of consumers in the creation of brand meanings through their experiences (Merz & Vargo 2009; Vargo & Lusch 2008; Warnaby 2009a).[48] Recent conceptualisations take into consideration the full dynamics of place brands and stress the need for greater stakeholder engagement towards the development of holistic and participatory approaches (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015). This in turn has led to scholars' attention to network governance as a distinct form of coordinating economic and social activities, since 'territorial governance aims at a common acceptance of territorial development, promoting dialogue and hearing, and spreading trust' to address complex issues (Argiolas et al 2009, p. 184).[49] Effective place branding thus requires engaging stakeholders widely, particularly locals (Houghton & Stevens 2011). Cooperation and active participation of the community, as well as private-public networks are key elements of territorial governance (Argiolas et al 2009, p. 181).[50]

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[46] Tourism studies, in their promotion of places as products and services, coined the term 'destination branding' to refer to '[…] decisions about how to use the brand would create new associations potentially affecting the brand image' in consumers' minds' (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 914).
[47] Governance is here understood as a process of social coordination, in which 'governance expresses a widespread belief that the state increasingly depends on other organisations to secure its intentions and deliver its policies' (Bevir 2008, p.3).
[48] See section 3.6, p 54, for a critical review of the concept of SDL.
[49] 'Territorial governance represents the coordination and organisation of a set of actors who are engaged in the solution of collective problems' and 'territory can be considered as a complex set of actors, resources, and values, a common good of material and immaterial assets, and a social and political construction created by the collective action of local actors, or territorial capital' (Argiolas et al 2009). See, also Powell (2003).
[50] The concept of 'Partnership Governance', for instance, responds to the changes that public organisations have undertaken, following a change from direct and unique interventionists, to effective collaborators and supervisors in

In this research, I argue that the process of branding places requires the development and communication of an identity based on a common vision for a place, with the intention to effect a positive reputation and image to both internal and external publics, with the resulting a 'logic of two-level games' requiring holistic participatory approaches to governance (Putnam 2009). I further argue that, in addition to the focus on different aspects of the place branding process, the policies and strategies guiding place branding in nations, regions or cities are inherently different and respond to the administrative, institutional, organisational and territorial particularities of the different spatial entities. Consequently, in the next section I observe how place branding practices have evolved in the different spatial scenarios of nations, regions and cities.

2.5 Place brands as spatial entities

> *Place-identity, in this collage of superimposed spatial images that implode in upon us, becomes an important issue, because everyone occupies a space for individualisation (a body, a room, a home, a shaping community, a nation), and how we individuate ourselves shapes identity.*
>
> *(Harvey 1989, p. 114)*

The increasing power of regions and cities is challenging the role of nations (Aronczyk 2008), leading to increased competition by regions (Kotler et al 1999) or cities (Turok 2009).[51] Both academics and practitioners have realised the diversity of purposes and special characteristics of places. Spatial and organisational characteristics require the development of specific place branding approaches, such as city branding, region branding, and nation branding, among others. Such realisation has sparked debate of the concept of place management (Kavaratzis 2005), since these activities require new forms of organisation to deal with complex processes of identity and image formation and lead to many distinctive approaches (Braun 2008; Zenker & Martin 2011).[52] Boisen et al (2011) build on Massey's (2005) concern of the instrumental view of place as

public-private partnership structures, aiming at fostering cooperation to achieve social and economic development (Argiolas et al 2009). Argiolas et al (2009) through a study of European Local Action Groups (LAG) analyse the factors influencing partnership actions, namely: business competition, political competition, economic diversification, citizen participation, community organisation, political culture and the political orientation of leaders and the characteristics of such leaders. They advocated for a model of 'Partnership Governance' that will bring about changes in the territorial governance models to promote community participation and sustainable development. Partnership Governance works to create and spread consensus among and between partners in the local community. The sharing of perspectives does not only mean passive acceptance, but also a belief in what the partnership does to fulfil its mission. Partners and local communities can operate to obtain an ambitious goal: the social and economic development of social systems. Their model of local governance involves all citizens and organisations in cooperative structures could inform the development participatory place branding practices. For more on the application of the model in the LAG, a specific type of public-private partnership developed in Europe, see ibid.

[51] Kotler et al (1999) investigate the relationship between economic development and investment in the creative industries, whereas Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) focus on foreign direct investment as a customer-oriented urban policy to support economic development.

[52]Generally, a structure to manage the 'brand project' is set up (i.e. Board of directors) to manage a budget derived from taxpayer's money. See, for instance, Zenker and Martin (2011).

territorially bounded identity, and reflect on places as part of geographical hierarchies, as social constructions made of selections of spatial elements.[53]

Geographers have emphasised places as fluid and dynamic geographical entities (Cresswell 2004)[54] leading to a renewed focus on the geographical dimensions of place (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015; Warnaby 2009b; Warnaby & Medway 2013).[55] The different implications related to branding distinct political or administrative territories are self-evident. 'Place branding is, at present, an umbrella term which encompasses the literature from at least five areas including the branding of cities, destinations, retail centres, nations and regions' (Hankinson 2015, p.27). Places are subject to different economic, political and social circumstances, which require different approaches to managing their images and reputations (Boisen et al 2011; Dinnie 2015; Da Silva Oliveira 2016; Zenker & Jacobsen 2015). For instance, the neoliberal discourse of globalisation has led to the application of corporate concepts of branding to national identities, as reflected in the terms 'brand state', 'competition state' and 'postmodern state' (Van Ham, 2008, p. 3). Whereas nations carry specific historic, cultural and geopolitical connotations, the identities of cities follow a more cosmopolitan approach (Fan 2006; Varga 2013).

Similarly, places as spatial entities interact in a system of associations of place brands (Andersson 2007; Hall 1999; Szondi 2007). These are commonly referred in the literature as 'umbrella brands', overarching brands whose value grows with the endorsement by smaller or less known place brands (Dinnie 2008; Hankinson 2015; Iversen & Hem 2008; Pasquinelli 2015; Pike 2009; Therkelsen & Halkier 2008). In some instances, branding for specific purposes (for example, destination branding) aligns with the overall branding of territorialities (regions, nations), evidencing also an overlap of disciplines (Anholt 2004a; Hanna & Rowley 2008). In fact, places are often embedded in a system of territorial entities that relate at a local, regional, national and supranational level (Paasi 2013).[56]

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[53] This view reflects on Warnaby et al's (2010) critique of identities of places as artificially orchestrated constructs to increase positive associations with brands, to improve the place's image. Furthermore, Boisen et al (2011) argue that this spatial selectivity results in the development of spatial policies for place branding at certain administrative levels which are sometimes in contradiction or overlap with others (ibid).

[54] Cresswell (2004) summarises the different geographical approaches to understanding the meanings of place as *descriptive, social-constructionist* and *phenomenological*, emphasizing the particularities, social processes and spatial experiences of people.

[55] From a cultural and urban planning perspectives, Richardson and Jensen (2003) study how spatialities are constructed in policy discourses to argue that 'the basic proposition is that the socio-spatial relation *works* by means of its coercive or enabling capacities for spatial practices. Furthermore, the socio spatial relation conveys *meaning* to social agents via multiple re-presentations, symbols, and discourses. Thus the socio-spatial relation on the one hand expresses possibilities and limitations to social actions within the built environment. On the other hand, the meaning and valuation of this relation is constantly negotiated and re-negotiated on the basis of social imageries and cultural values' (2003, p. 15, emphasis in original).

[56] For instance, the links between the supra-national regional brand of the *European Union*, alongside a list of related brands such as a nation brand like *France*, an infra-national regional brand like *Normandie,* a city brand like *Paris*, and a neighborhood brand like *Sacré-Coeur*.

Scholars agree on the need to develop unified overarching or 'umbrella' place brands (Hankinson 2001; Iversen & Hem 2008; Morgan & Pritchard 2002; Pike 2009; Rainisto 2003), since they have the potential to add value through associations with less known brands (Iversen & Hem 2008; Rainisto 2003). This approach, however, might not be observant of the spatial particularities of places (Da Silva Oliveira 2016). Similarly, Caldwell and Freire applied De Chernatony's 'Brand Box Model', based on the representationality versus functionality of place brands and embedded symbolic values to places, in an attempt to understand the differences between the branding of countries, regions and cities (De Chernatony in Caldwell & Freire 2004, p. 53).[57]

Observing the political, cultural, institutional, organisational, societal and economic differences between varied spatial identities is key to unravel the layers of complexity in applying branding principles to places. The review above has observed the place construct from social, geographical and political perspectives, while the differences introduced above are further developed and linked to the application of different place branding models and approaches in the next sections.

2.5.1 Managing national reputations: a public diplomacy endeavour?

The historical account of the establishment of the academic field of place branding outlined above points to its simultaneous but yet isolated development in the disciplines of urban studies, tourism and marketing. These disciplines each attempted to brand places following an economic rationale of globalisation, with the aim to increasing the (economic) competitive advantage of places. Concurrently, the domain of public diplomacy, traditionally engaged with the management of the reputations of nations to support international relations and foreign affairs, started to embrace the concept of place branding as an alternative form of persuasion to replace old-fashion one-way propaganda, responding to changes in communication patterns in the public sphere (Anholt 2004a, 2006; Cull 2009; Szondi 2008).[58] Diplomats and government officials are now expected to become 'nation brand managers' (Kaneva 2011a), and subsequently place branding has become a tool for public diplomacy (Szondi 2008). Under this view, the notion of 'brand state' refers to 'the outside world's ideas about a particular country' resulting in the need

[57] This model resonates Giovanardi's conceptualisation of place brands as combinations of *haft* and *sord* factors (2011). Caldwell and Freire (2004) observe branding as a tool of marketing and support the branding of places following that of consumer goods and services. In their study of destination branding, Caldwell and Freire (2004) highlight the representational and emotive character of national identities, as opposed to the higher functionality of the identities and images of cities and regions. In this thesis, I argue that some regions also present distinctive functional identities coupled with a strong sense of place linked to both functional and representational attributes, that in the case of Tasmania could be islandness and its colonial past (Stratford 2008). The management of the identities of regions might require two-levels of dialogue: with internal and with external audiences. This supports a wider understanding to the management and governance of place brands overlooked by traditional consumer-oriented place branding practices (Caldwell & Freire 2004).

[58] Australia, Hong Kong and Spain pioneered a trend to embrace place branding in 1990s (Baker 2012).

for politicians to train themselves on brand asset management (van Ham 2001, p. 2). However, the relationship between nation branding and public diplomacy under the influences of such diverse fields remained unclear and has been the focus of several academic reviews (Gilboa 2008; Fan 2006; Kavaratzis 2005; Papadopoulos 2004; Szondi 2008; Wang 2007).[59]

Public diplomacy has traditionally been understood as a nation's tool to engage and communicate with both domestic and foreign audiences in international relations (Anholt 2006; Zaharna 2014). 'An inherent goal of public diplomacy is to communicate and cultivate on behalf of a nation-state a desired image and reputation, and to build common ground and understanding among nations and peoples' (Wang 2005, p. 32). This form of 'soft power' as a non-coercive instrument of propaganda has undergone immense changes due to the revolution brought about by the changes in ICT (Nye 2004, 2011). Once a tool of national foreign offices to manage the image and reputations of places, public diplomacy has evolved into a form of 'dialogic communication' since 'communication technologies have played a crucial role in the democratization of information generation, dissemination and access [of information]' (Wang 2005, p. 34).[60] 'Dialogic communication' is understood here as a form of communicative action taking place in the public sphere and is aimed at building common understanding through communicative interactions (Kent & Taylor 2002). For instance, under former US President Obama's administration, Judith McHale, in charge of the public diplomacy and public affairs portfolio, talked in her first address about people-to-people (P2P) diplomacy, situating public diplomacy in global communications, since 'this is not a propaganda contest – it is a relationship race' (McHale in Snow 2014, p. 65).[61]

Florek notes changes to understandings of place as a result of online communications in digital communities, since 'with the advent of user-generated content, every individual might potentially influence the way in which [it] is perceived and evaluated' (2011, p. 83).[62] Fouts (2010) argues similarly that ICT communication has resulted in two-way communication, replacing one-way

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[59] As previously mentioned, Anholt envisions place branding as 'a component of national policy' (2008b, p. 23 in Kaneva 2011). Concurrently, Anholt established the journal *Place Branding* in 2004 in an attempt to institutionalize and advance academic debate on place branding. The journal was renamed *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* in 2006, as a reflection of the intersection of research on the two areas.

[60] One-way messaging practices have been challenged by the increasing civic participation in public opinion through communicative interactions of sub-national actors in the public sphere (Wang 2007).

[61] Expanding on the idea of engagement, Snow (2014) describes how Judith McHale's successor continued emphasising public-private partnerships, expanding into alternative arrangements to deliver public diplomacy. Snow (ibid) concludes that the future of public diplomacy will be decided by the global civil society and will be based on the Chinese concept of 'connection' or *guanxi* (Chinese term used here to refer to personal relationships based on the principle of reciprocity). For a review and examples of P2P, see also Cowan and Arsenault (2008); Cull (2009); Wang (2008) and for more on collaborative approaches to public diplomacy, see also Seo (2014).

[62] Kavaratzis further elaborates that the increased direct engagement that the online environment has brought about results in the evolution of consumer-communication to consumer-to-brand and consumer-to-consumer communication, facilitating the dialogue and participation on the construction of brand meaning (2012, p. 14).

messaging of traditional branding in a wider variety of media, including traditional media such as TV, and 'earned media' such as word of mouth and editorial (Kavaratzis 2012). Consumers therefore amplify communicated messages in the public sphere.

When it comes to conveying national identities, 'historically public diplomacy has taken the form of contact between one government and the people of another state', whereas nation branding encompasses the communication of national identities to both foreign and domestic audiences (Anholt 2007; Cull 2009, p.12). In this sense, the emergence of the New Public Diplomacy responds to the changes in communication patterns that have redefined the terms of stakeholder engagement (Cull 2016; Nye 2004). [63] The more prominent role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in formal communication, and the role of new technologies as enablers of multi-channel communication, have led to the rise of the global public sphere, a space in which domestic and international spheres collide (Castells 2008).[64] In this new scenario, New Public Diplomacy draws from marketing and communication theory, recognising the importance of *soft power* and *branding*, and the need to move to a relational people-to-people model replacing top-down actor-to-people communication patterns characteristic of the Cold War era (Cull 2010, p. 12-13). Consequently, '[a] nation cannot be treated simply as a brand writ large' (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy in Gertner 2011a, p. 119).

In addition to the influence of marketing and international relations in the development of place branding theory and practice, Kaneva (2011) argues that the conception of nations as brands relates to critical scholarship debates of communication and culture, the implications of which should be observed when theorising nations as brands.[65] Perhaps public sector representatives neglect the communication processes underlying the communication of place identities, and

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[63] Cull (2016) argues that the power states hold is nowadays determined by their 'soft power', mainly supported by the state's culture and policies, instead of the one-way propaganda through a comparison between Nordic and US Public Diplomacy. In his understanding of public diplomacy as a tool for foreign policy, Cull (ibid) recognises image as a dimension of power.

[64] The term 'nongovernmental organisation' or NGO emerged to assit the differentiation in the United Nations (UN) Charter between participation rights between agencies and private organisations (2017, p. 25) Since their structure and territorial character (international, national, regional, urban) vary, there is no generally accepted definition of an NGO (ibid, p. 25-26). For more on the concept of NGO, see Willets (2002).

[65] Kaneva (2011) reflects on the issues associated with commodification, the capitalist neoliberal system and globalisation, the state of the public sphere and civil society, the centrality of identities in contemporary experiences and their links to postmodern conceptions of space and place. Kaneva (ibid) argues that cultural approaches based on the fields of media and cultural studies, contrary to marketing and political approaches to branding, are not concerned with advancing a theory of nation branding and informing practice, but rather in critiquing their relationship with national identity as a 'dynamic struggle and negotiation', related to both cultural and governance concepts. Kaneva (ibid) calls for critical research in the field of communications for nation branding and provides a useful distinction in the literature of place branding between technical economic, political and cultural approaches, adapting Bell's (1976) structural model of capitalist social order. The technical economic approach is primarily concerned with economic growth and includes marketing, management and tourism domains; the political approach observes the relationship between national images and participation in international relations and includes the fields of international relations, public relations and international communications; finally, the cultural approach is concerned with how nation branding affects national and cultural identities and includes the fields of media and cultural studies (Kaneva 2011).

assume that by acquiring the necessary marketing and branding expertise places can strategically manage their image and reputation to secure economic competitive advantage. Such assumptions disregard historical formation of national identities as 'organic' processes (Wang 2008), and conceive place identities as assets (Anholt-GMI Nation Brand Index; FutureBrand's Country Brand Index) that can be managed by marketing consultants.[66]

Consequently, scholars observing place and nation brands from an international relations perspective, have focused on the changes in foreign relations in the new international public sphere (Wang 2005; Zaharna et al 2014; Melissen 2005). In this context, however, the role of place branding is to shape perceptions in foreign audiences. In light of the changes in ICT and increase on user-generated content, however, academics need to rethink communication in the practice of public diplomacy as a dialogue or two-way process (Anholt 2006). In this context, both domestic and foreign audiences engage in a negotiation of meaning about the place (Putman 2009). Public diplomacy practice, therefore, needs to respond to growing 'communication channels in the global arena' and address a complex system of communication dynamics in which stakeholders need to be engaged at multiple levels in order to build both 'common understanding and relationships' that will translate in positive images and reputations (Wang 2005, p. 41).

Although it is out of the scope of this dissertation to critically analyse the essence of the concept of nation branding and draw parallels with this form of territorial place branding practice in a highly politicised context as opposed to other types of purposive branding such as tourism or destination branding, it is important to draw attention to the similarities underlying the complexity inherent in branding places as socially constructed identities in light of the changes in communicative patterns in the public sphere.[67]

2.6 Branding for urban revitalisation: city branding

The branding of cities has traditionally been observed from urban planning and urban policy perspectives, and has particular implications for contemporary urban governance (Evans 2001, 2003; Hall & Hubbard 1996; Jensen 2007; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Landry 2000; Trueman et al 2004).[68] Academic debate on city marketing has been mostly conducted in journals from

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[66] In the case of the Anholt-GMI Nation Brand Index, as explained earlier in the chapter (see Figure 3, p. 24), for instance, Anholt developed a 'national brand hexagon' including the following dimensions: tourism, exports, investment and immigration, governance, culture, and heritage and people. This model is used as a tool to 'measure' nation brands, and responds to an attempt to prove branding effectiveness in the absence of empirical evidence of the success of such practices in support of economic development. For more information, visit <http://nation-brands.gfk.com/>. For a review of such place brand measurement indexes, and a critique of their lack of exploration of the whole network, symbolism, meanings and physical characteristics in the context of cities, see Sevin (2014).
[67] See Olins (2005) for a practical review, and Dinnie (2015) for a detailed theoretical account.
[68] Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) analyse city branding strategies to argue that place branding is an approach to urban governance aimed at constructing and promoting a positive place image.

urban studies, tourism, geography and marketing. Following the growth in importance of cities as economic, creative and innovative hubs (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2014; Florida 2005; Parkenson & Saunders 2005; Ward 2000a,b), the augmented debate on city planning and city branding has resulted in a rich multidisciplinary literature, mainly drawing from a wider portfolio of urban planning, marketing, management, urban governance, public policy and sociological approaches (Ashworth & Voogd 1990; Bennett & Savani 2003; Braun 2008, 2012; Dinnie 2011; Eshuis & Edwards 2013; Hall & Hubbard 1998; Harvey 1989; Hospers 2010; Kalandides 2011b; Kavaratzis 2004; Kotler et al 1993; Lash and Urry 1994; Lucarelli 2011; Ooi 2011).[69] The spatial sensitivities of cities however require specific approaches to city or urban branding (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009; Jensen 2007). In an attempt to categorise theoretical approaches to the branding of cities, Lucarelli and Berg provided a useful classification of the conceptualisation of city branding from the perspectives of production, appropriation and critical studies of brands and branding (2011).[70] The different perspectives are conceived as not mutually exclusive and refer, respectively, to the study of the organisation and government arrangements underlying production and management of place brands, the reception and consumption of the brand, and factors affecting the economic, social and cultural branded environment (Lucarelli & Berg 2011, p. 18). Pasquinelli (2016) also highlights the social issues related to urban branding, particularly in the tourism domain, and the necessity to include urban communities and a range of other stakeholders in urban development processes.[71] For instance, in urban or city branding, the discourse of culture, and in particular on creative cities, has informed new urban and cultural planning frameworks based on innovation and creativity as main drivers of the economic development of cities (Kunzmann 2004). Similarly, Landry argues:

> A creative milieu is a place – either a cluster of buildings, a part of a city, a city as a whole or a region – that contains the necessary preconditions in terms of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure to generate a flow of ideas and inventions […] where a critical mass of entrepreneurs, intellectuals, social activists, artists, administrators, power brokers or students can operate in an open-minded cosmopolitan context and where face to face interaction creates new ideas, artefacts, products, services and institutions and as a consequence contributes to economic success (2000, p.133).

Clearly, since innovation and creativity can only flow in dynamic networks, there is a need to observe the social interactions, power struggles, and governance within spatial entities to better understand the 'social production of space' and assist the development of place branding strategies accordingly (Harvey 1989; Lefebvre 1991).[72] The concept of 'urban governance',

[69] For an extensive review of the growth and establishment of the research domain of city branding between 1988-2009 see Jensen (2007) and Lucarelli & Berg (2011).
[70] Although the application to regional cities might be debated, since according to Lucarelli and Berg, research was primarily concerned with analysing ethnographic data from primarily Western first-tier cities (ibid*)*.
[71] For a review of the urban tourism phenomenon, see Pasquinelli (2016).
[72] For a review of place as a product of social phenomena, see Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015).

defined as how and by whom city policies are produced, decided and implemented is key to the process of city branding (Braun 2008, p. 82, 2012). Urban governance also includes mechanisms for structuring collective action coming from the public sector, private sector or civil society (Braun 2007, p. 65).[73] This form of participatory governance (Kooiman 2002) offers the institutional flexibility and necessary interaction to solve societal problems. It is therefore imperative to observe the dynamics of public-private partnerships for social and economic development of the territories under scrutiny. Chapter Four further observes the interactive dynamics of complex governance processes in place branding.

2.6.1 Branding for regional development

Regions, like nations and cities, have been developing interest in place branding practices to foster economic development in light of inter-regional competition (Pike et al 2006; Zenker & Jacobsen 2015). Comparable to nations, regions present different characteristics that need to be observed when examining the political dimension of place identities (Paasi 2013). For instance, Messely et al (2014) analysed regional actors and their choices in two regional branding projects in Flanders, Belgium, to conclude that the interaction between 'territorial, symbolic and institutional' components of regions had an impact on the selected partners, as well as in the choice of brand values and strategies (2014). In their study, Messely et al (2014) also found that regional network organisations or similar structures often already partner with a range of other actors, such as tourism departments and business organisations in the development of branding strategies for regions. Similarly, Pasquinelli argues for a conceptualisation of regions as 'networks of brands' (2015). Apart from the diversity of the network of relationships in regions (with different administrative, institutional and societal differences), often regional place brand attributes are 'selective', resulting in limited representation of the reality of the region (Boisen et al 2011).[74] In some cases, communities of place branding practice are formed with the aim to promote place branding at a regional level[75]. Furthermore, co-branding of products and places to identify products in the market by associating them to their place of production, add strongly to the overall regional brand (Papadopoulos 2004).[76] Since the brands of regions are also co-created by a range of stakeholders, a more holistic and inclusive approach to regional branding is needed (Therkelsen & Halkier 2011).

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[73] Since urban governance also shares a territorial component, it can refer to governance either in an urban region, city or neighbourhood (Healey 2006, p. 301).
[74] See Boisen et al (2011) on the biases of selecting different attributes of place to suit specific purposes or goals.
[75] See, for instance, Cleave and Arku's (2015) exploration of the case of Ontario, Canada.
[76] See Papadopoulos (2011) on product-country image, and the interrelation of country, product and tourism images,

Regional identities, conceived as the sum of the natural and cultural aspects of bounded spaces that lead to residents' identification with place (Paasi 2003) are often different from those of cities or nations. The concept of regional competitiveness has been gaining ground due to the renewed importance of regions as catalysts of economic development, although it is not exempt from contradictions between the dominant policy prescription of uniqueness and the liveability of the social environment (Bristow 2010, pp. 66-67; Terlouw 2012). It is in this sense that Paasi understands regional identity as a social construct that is 'produced and reproduced in discourse' generated through social practices and power relations (2013, p. 1,208). Therefore, regional identities contain both place-bounded and relational perspectives, which are socially and historically constructed and shaped by the territorial, symbolic and institutional aspects of regions (Paasi 2013). Furthermore, the process of construction of regional identities is effected by political pressure and contested decision-making, often leading to a dominant discourse of tourism or regional development (Castells 2007; Paasi 2010; Boisen et al 2011).[77] Eversole further argues that regions often focus on their distinctive features with a goal of economic development, forgetting that the most unique attributes are rather social and cultural, and therefore the social networks that emphasise knowledge transfer and shared norms are potentially more effective ways to create competitive advantage (2009, p. 98).[78]

Eversole reflects the need for a closer analysis of interactions between state and non-state actors in recognition of the elusiveness of the concept of place management as a tool for regional economic development (2009), pointing to the political nature of branding regions (Lucarelli & Giovanardi 2016).[79] The particularities of regions result in extra governance challenges for place branding practitioners, since regions (and often urban centres) act as umbrella brands, amalgamating different brand identities (Iversen & Hem 2008; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). Medway and Warnaby characterise places without a definite image or set of symbolic meanings and with different administrative or jurisdictional boundaries as 'fuzzy' (2008, p. 165). Institutional and administrative differences and cross-overs in regional contexts require new and more complex governance arrangements (Zenker & Jacobsen 2015), as unclear boundaries complicate the task of regional branding (Hospers 2006; Paasi 2002).

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[77] In light of the disconnection between the projected identities and the reality of regions, Terlouw (2012) distinguishes between two major types of regional identities, namely 'thick' (traditional and historical, and well-established), and 'thin' (transitory and focused on economic competitiveness).

[78] Furthermore, people often identify with social networks transcending regional boundaries (Allen et al 1998). Also, in the context of the EU, regional identity, together with sustainable development has been a key strategy to foster regional competitiveness (particularly during Prodi's Commission 2002-2006, as cited by Paasi 2013, p. 1,211).

[79] For a detailed review of the regional brand building process, see Lucarelli and Giovanardi (2016).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter argues the complexity of place branding as a tool for place development which is evidence by the lack of integration of concepts and clear conceptual framework. Furthermore, it argues that top-down approaches to managing place brands are often in conflict with bottom-up processes of communication of meaning about place in the network society. Consequently, the chapter argues the importance of examining place branding social and political dimensions. In light of the arguments of this chapter, Chapter Three focuses on a critical review of place brands as socially constructed and politicised concepts, as well as the cultural, ethical, institutional and organisational frameworks in which place branding takes place. In light of the apparent disconnect in branding practices, and in order to better understand the complexities of the place brand construct, the chapter draws on literature from communications, geography, governance, network society, public diplomacy, public administration, regional development and policy networks to address the challenges of branding places in the public sphere.

CHAPTER THREE: PLACE BRANDING 2.0: CHALLENGES OF BRANDING PLACES IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

3.1 Overview

> *Nation Branding may undermine the possibility of a well-functioning public sphere – an arena of open debate and disputation on issues of social and political significance that are of interest to citizens. Both Jürgen Habermas and Charles Taylor have influentially argued that a functioning public sphere is necessary for democratic processes, since it enables the creation of consensus without the mediation of the political sphere.*
>
> *(Varga 2013, p. 834)*

Web 2.0 technology[80] is fundamentally altering the way places are branded since it allows endless networks of horizontal and open communication in which meaning about places is constantly reinterpreted in a communicative process of co-creation (Go & Govers 2010; Govers 2015; Hanna & Rowley 2015; Ketter & Avraham 2012; O'Reilly 2005; Sevin 2013).[81] An exploration of place branding thus requires an analysis of the processes of construction of meaning as place branding processes are aimed at 'the crafting of the brand identity, as well as its transmission' (Sevin 2011, p.159) as evidenced in Figure 8 below.

[80] Here I use the term 'Web 2.0' rather metaphorically, to refer to a new web that, from a conceptual point of view, not technical, has emerged and has consolidated since 2005. Its main features are the new generation extended social and communicative dimensions, and examples of these are blogs, social networks, forums, wikis, and so forth.

[81] Ketter and Avraham (2012) reviewed the evolution of online marketing arguing that during the period from 1991 to 2003, companies provided content to users in the same way that radio and television did. This hierarchical and linear structure of Web 1.0 marketing was followed by the move towards blogs, social networking sites and other content-sharing portals or Web 2.0 from 2004. New online technologies allowed two-way exchanges of information and have led to growth in User Generated Content, or content produced by users themselves (Ketter & Avraham 2012). Similarly, O'Reilly, from a corporate perspective, concludes that the core competencies of Web 2.0 companies include: to trust users as co-developers, and to harness collective intelligence (2005, p. 37).

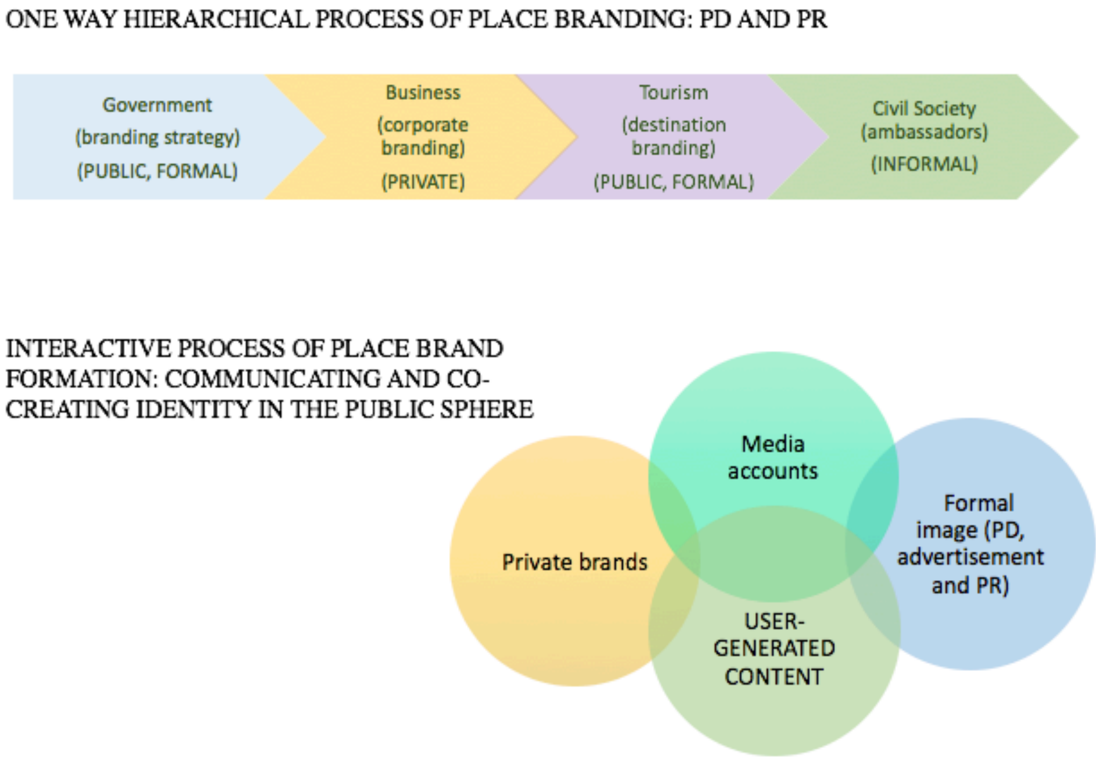

Figure 8. Traditional Place Branding vs Branding Places in the Public Sphere (Author's own elaboration).

Place brands enhance the identity and culture of places, transcending the mere promotion of destinations, experiences and products (Gnoth 2007). The relationship between place branding and the communication of symbolic meaning about place presents several challenges to governments in their management of collective place identities, particularly around issues related to democratic values, transparency and accountability (Boisen 2007; De San Eugenio Vela 2013; Varga 2013).[82] This chapter reviews the literature on analysing the communicative processes and interactions underlying the place branding process. The aim is to review the cultural and social aspects of place brands affecting the multi-layered communicative processes that support the creation of place brands or collective 'sense of place' (Kalandides 2011a) in the network society. In a context characterised by a 'space of flows', where social and the territorial boundaries are diffuse and spaces are configured by networks of interactions (Castells 1999, 2000ab),[83] it argues

[82] The notion of nation branding as 'public good' supported by Varga (2013) relates to Moore's (2013) concept of 'public value' as a conceptual framework to encourage public managers to strategically tackle complex problems in the community. This concept results from the loss of confidence and trust in government's purpose, justice and fairness in the public sphere, and implies that civil society could contribute to the debate of collective public responsibility raising an important debate between policymaking and administration around the profound structural changes the network society brings (ibid).
[83] For a review of the concept of 'space of flows' and on how ICT developments have brought about societal and communication challenges, see Castells (1999, 2000).

how changes in communication patterns fundamentally affect the way brands communicate, and the process of place brand formation.

3.2 Place brand 2.0 in the network society

> *Actors share messages from multiple senders-receivers, using a versatile, diversified and open-ended communication system integrating messages and codes from all sources, exercising socialised communication in multimodal and multichannel networks.*
>
> *(Castells 2011, p. 780)*

The social context in which communication about places occurs is affected by existing social structures and relations, communication patterns and channels. Digital communications have allowed new online forms of place branding (Munro 2011; Hanna & Rowley 2015) and place brands are consequently affected by new horizontal forms of communication and user-generated content (Andéhn et al 2014; Kavaratzis 2012): 'with the advent of user-generated content, every individual might potentially influence the way a city is perceived and evaluated' (Florek 2011, p. 83). [84] User-generated content challenges the traditional approach to branding places introduced in Chapter Two. Inevitably, public, formal and controlled government branding confronts content by other sources of information, in particular the media and citizens, particularly counter-narratives arising from social movements. [85] In addition, social media networks allow users to 'gain more power and take an active role in the creation and distribution of campaign messages' (Ketter & Avraham 2012, p. 285).

Communication patterns have thus evolved from linear one-way messaging of prefabricated messages in a top-down system to two-way processes in 'circular and interactive models' (Avraham & Ketter 2008; Ketter & Avraham 2012, p. 286).[86] In this sense, Van Dijck (2009) introduced the term *prosumer* to refer to consumers that are also producers of online content. From a sociological perspective this is linked to the idea of *consumer culture*, particularly the relationship between the symbolic meanings of brands and the formation of individual identities, as well as the cultural politics of brand consumption (Lury 2011b). Consumers now engage in *virtual brand communities*, and thus brand management needs to observe the process of co-creation through which online and social media marketing aims at creating a rapport between

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[84] In light of ICT developments in city branding, Florek refers to the role of citizens as *prosumers*, consumers and professionals engaged and participating in a dialogue about the city that is changing communication strategies and tools, since 'web 2.0 provides services that invite users to engage in direct and strong participation' (2011, p. 83).
[85] For an example of the impact of digital media and counter-narratives in the *Arab Spring,* see Howard and Hussain (2011). See also Ooi (2008, p. 295) for an example based on Singapore.
[86] In this new space for interaction, consumers regain control of the marketing process, and marketers take a role as facilitator of interactions, enhancing conversation and communities in two-way exchanges (Ketter & Avraham 2014). Under this model, 'communication [is seen] as a joint process of sharing and creating meaning, in which both sender and receiver are taking an active role in communication (Morreale et al in Ketter & Avraham 2012, p. 286).

places and consumers in the public sphere often through social networking sites (Black & Velotsou 2017; Brodie et al 2011; Healy & McDonagh 2012).[87]

Sociologist Manuel Castells considers space as the 'expression of society', not its *reflection* (Castells 2010, p.440-441; see also Harvey 1990) and defines the social network as 'the new occupational structure around the interaction among three dimensions of production relationships: value making, relation making and decision making' (Castells 2000, p. 696). In this context, a new *space of flows* emerges where electronic circuits and information systems, as well as territories as physical places share functional or symbolic meaning (ibid). Castells' distinction between the physical attributes and symbolic meanings of places is linked to place brands representational and functional attributes (Caldwell & Freire 2004).[88]

The above mentioned changes in communication patterns have also been acknowledged in the public diplomacy domain (Sevin 2011).[89] '[B]eyond any network structure, there are the communication dynamics' (Zaharna 2014, p. 173). Although communication is seen as just one component in nation branding (Anholt 2007), Riordan (2005) argues for a dialogue-based model of public diplomacy for foreign policy, recognising that through the act of exchanging, discussing and negotiating meaning identities of places are formed. Here, relational public diplomacy as a new approach provides interesting applications to the branding of places:

> The relational paradigm assumes that politics is a cumulative, multilevel, open-ended process of continuous interaction among significant clusters of citizens in and out of government and the relationships they form to solve public problems in whole bodies politic across permeable boundaries either within or between groups, communities, or countries (Saunders 2014, p. 137).[90]

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[87] Muniz and O'Guinn introduced the idea of brand community as 'a specialised, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand' reflecting on a consumer-brand-consumer relationship based on continuous exchanges (2001, p. 412). A parallel can be drawn between the nature of brand communities and place communities, as both are bounded.

[88] Caldwell and Freire (2004) building on De Chernatony and McWilliam 'Brand Box Model' presented a model based on functional and representational aspects of brands (see Chapter Two, pp. 27, 36).

[89] In his study of ethics of practice in place branding, Sevin (2011) draws on Habermas to argue that two-way communication constricts the role of the audience to feedback providers and still does not create public sphere since there is a lack of inclusive participation. Sevin argues that communication is inherent to processes aimed at constructing meaning, and therefore has a key role in the construction of place identity. Sevin's (2011) use of communicative action as an analytical framework highlights the importance of mediation and dialogue in place branding. Similarly, the use of the term 'communicative' instead of 'communication' aims at reflecting the interactive process of branding places based on 'a cooperative attempt to reach a common understating through argumentation' (ibid, p.159).

[90] Saunders (2014) introduces the concepts of 'relational paradigm' and 'sustained dialogue' as frameworks to capture citizen power. '[…] the relational paradigm: a political process of continuous interaction between clusters of citizens in whole bodies politic across permeable borders. This formulation provided a place for thinking about citizens' politics and the overall relationships between countries' (ibid, p. 135). Saunders' (ibid) relational paradigm is based on six propositions: the political process must be interpreted as a complex process of interactions between citizens, not just a set of institutions; it has to be based on a process of interaction; it has to capture continuous interactions (good relationships will foster 'relational power'); there needs to be a shift from reaction to interaction permeating group boundaries; relationships are made of five arenas of interaction: identity, interests, power, perceptions (misperceptions and stereotypes) and patters of interaction; and the concept of relationship is both an analytical and operational tool. Similarly, Saunders' (ibid) international political career in conflict resolution made him recognise

Societal debate has been traditionally organised by public officials, notably politicians and diplomats (Melissen 2005). However, the changes in communication in social networks and public sphere have encouraged grass-roots debate led by civil society (Castells 2008).[91] Following those changes, Castells defines the role of public diplomacy as '[…] the diplomacy of the public, not of the government, intervenes in this global public sphere, laying the ground for traditional forms of diplomacy to act beyond the strict negotiation of power relationships by building on shared cultural meaning, the essence of communication' (Castells 2008, p.78).[92] The public sphere is understood here as 'a network for communicating information and points of view' (Habermas 1996, p. 360 in Castells 2008, p. 78) and 'the space where people come together as citizens and articulate their autonomous views to influence the political institutions of society' (Castells 2008, p. 78)

A recognition of the necessity to shift towards relational communication models in practice is illustrated by the European Union and the United States use of 'interactive public diplomacy' based on a network of organisations with the aim to create social capital (Cowan & Arsenault 2008; Kaneva 2011; Snow 2014; Snow & Taylor 2008).[93] Bourdieu reflects on capital as a form of power and defines social capital, in opposition to economic and cultural capital, as 'connections' (2011, p. 16),[94] and 'networks of networks' of communications consisting of people sharing common values as examples of successful relational public diplomacy (Taylor & Kent 2014, p. 103). If dialogue can strengthen relationships and help citizens plan and enact social, economic and political change (Saunders, 2014), then it could support the development

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that the energy and capacity of citizens outside governments will meet the challenges of our times if channeled to work in the public interest through relationships, associations or networks outside government.

[91] Castells' views are particularly relevant in place branding since in the process of branding places, the role of civil society has traditionally been limited to their utility at different stages of implementation of the territory's brand. Castells (2008) refers to civil society as actors who defend their interests, as well as specific values against or beyond the formal political process. Castells (ibid) also observes the rise of non-governmental organisations acting as channels to address global problems outside the government, which present increasing popularity and legitimacy. In addition, Castells (ibid) argues that democratic social movements are calling for new forms of political representation in governance as a consequence of the current crisis of legitimacy in government. Castells' observations provides strong parallels with informal place branding practices, outside and sometimes contradicting formal branding efforts.

[92] Similarly, in his reflection on global governance, Castells introduces the concept of the 'network state', 'characterised by shared sovereignty and responsibility, flexibility of procedures of governance, and greater diversity in the relationship between governments and citizens in terms of time and space' and notes a lack of culture of cooperation in decision-making processes, stating that 'it is essential for state actors, and for intergovernmental institutions, such as the United Nations, to relate to civil society not only around institutional mechanisms and procedures of political representation but in public debates in the global public sphere' (2008, p. 88-90). Castells goes on to set the goal of public diplomacy as a reorganisation of power relationships with a new communication space for the diplomacy of the public to occur (ibid, p. 91).

[93] For instance, the creation of networks of advocacy that brought about democratic and human rights values in Croatia (Kaneva 2011).

[94] Social capital defined by the OECD as 'networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups' (OECD 2017). For a review of concept of social capital see also Coleman (1988) and Putman (1995).

of relationships among diverse and different stakeholder groups in branding places and the creation of social capital. Correspondingly, Taylor and Kent (2014) argue that social capital is a result of the relationships between government and civil society organisations, and that public diplomacy is more effective and lasting when devoted to maintaining relationships among people and other organisations.[95]

Furthermore, Zaharna (2014) reviews the framework of networked public diplomacy focusing on the relational dynamics of networks, and distinguishes between 'networks as a *structure* and collaboration as a *process'* arguing that 'collaboration means individuals are not only connecting and sharing information, but through the process of their interactions, [they] are generating knowledge, innovation and synergistic results' (ibid 2014, p. 173).[96] The purpose of the network also determines the communication mode of choice, and that this in turn affects the dynamics of stakeholder relationships (ibid 2014, p. 177).[97] Similarly, Seo argues that a new *relational framework* (engaging with ordinary citizens) is replacing the *informational framework* (relationships between journalists, businesses, scholars and artists) (2014 p. 158).

Since in network strategy, information generates knowledge and problem solving that results in value-added for the network (Zaharna 2014, p. 183),[98] observing the relational dynamics in the network of stakeholders directly or indirectly engaged in branding places and the interactions underlying the co-creation of brand meaning could support more effective practice.

Public diplomacy officials have embraced the term 'networked public diplomacy' or 'relational public diplomacy', and now support the use of social networks as platforms for interaction

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[95] Taylor and Kent (2014) conclude that the real impact of public diplomacy is building networks of organisations that share values, and that leave a lasting effect with local and global implications. In their review of the role of the use of not-for-profit civil society organisations for public diplomacy in the rebuilding of Balkan countries and the network of organisations that was then formed, the authors emphasise the need for communicative networks with shared common values for effective public diplomacy.

[96] Zaharna (2014) states that the 'key characteristics common to network-based initiatives [are] sponsor participants, purpose, time frame and communication mode'. Where 'traditional state-centric public diplomacy would assume a state sponsor', newer initiatives include non-state actors and even recognise their ability to originate network initiatives (ibid, p. 175). Policy-oriented networks aim to retain network members or strategic stakeholders and often present a partnership between the state and non-state actors to achieve political goals. Non-political network initiatives may engage stakeholders on issues such as science, medicine, education, or the environment and seek goals such as mutual understanding, relationship building, or collaborative exchanges (ibid, p. 176). Naturally, sponsors may have strong, underlying political motivations for these apolitical initiatives. In contrast, policy-oriented networks (which I argue are suitable for place branding) have an explicitly articulated and advanced political goal, such as policy advocacy, policy formation, or agenda setting and result in higher trust and greater engagement (ibid, p. 176).

[97] Zaharna argues that open-ended long-term networks boost stakeholder trust and reciprocal commitment (2014, p. 177). Contrary to traditional place branding practices, 'network communication focuses first on creating the structure and relational dynamics for effective communication among network members and *then* members collaborate to co-create a storyline' (ibid, p. 183). Contrary to traditional place branding practices, 'network communication focuses first on creating the structure and relational dynamics for effective communication among network members and then members collaborate to co-create a storyline' (ibid, p. 183).

[98] Zaharna differentiates between network synergy, focusing on the relational dynamics, and network strategy, focusing on the information dynamics, which is often the reason for a stakeholder to enter and be connected to the network (2014, p. 181-184).

between governments, public, private and voluntary organizations, as well as local and foreign publics (Hocking 2008). For instance, Arsenault reviews the role of the Internet in networked public diplomacy and observes how governments are changing their practices to connect with foreign publics through 'public diplomacy 2.0', consisting of *forming relationships* with publics as opposed to *presenting messages* (2014, p. 194).[99] Public diplomacy has evolved into a process of exchanging messages in which digital social networks are the platforms for networked public diplomacy to occur. Although the application of the relation model of public diplomacy to place branding processes could further develop the interactions between stakeholders, place branding not only aims at communicating with foreign publics but also at developing local identities (Van Ham 2008).

Public diplomacy has traditionally built on public opinion in the public sphere following a Westphalian model that 'has tacitly assumed the frame of a bounded political community with its own territorial state', as a reflection of the dominance of state in the place construct (Habermas 1962; Fraser 2007, p.8).[100] The advent of globalisation, however, has questioned public sphere theory and, in particular, the 'normative legitimacy and political efficacy of communicative power' (Fraser 2007, p.8). Although it is out of the scope of this dissertation to reflect on a reconceptualisation of the public sphere, it is important to note the links between place identity and place brand as a means of social integration, bounding citizens to engage in and support common place branding processes, and 'sense of place' in the public realm (Massey 1994).

The next section reflects on the complexity and dynamism of places, and the consequent challenges to place brand communication.

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[99] Arsenault (2014) refers to a dual role of communication networks: first as conduits through which different actors attempt to achieve particular goals (information sharing, relationship building, collaboration, or strategic foreign policy promotion) and electronic networks that form these communication conduits as objects of power struggles. For a detailed review of the role of the Internet in public diplomacy, see Arsenault (2013).
[100] The Westphalian model aims at communicative parity and is based on ideas about shared citizenship and bounded communities of the members of a particular polity; it also posits that 'all potentially affected by political decisions should have the chance to participate on terms of parity in the informal processes of opinion formation to which the decision-makers should be accountable (Fraser 2007, p. 21).

3.3 The complexity of place brands: places as dynamic identities

A city branding process is ongoing. It is not static. Neither is society.

(Ooi 2011, p. 57)

As I argued in Chapter Two, the literature has not succeeded in integrating the concepts of place branding and place identity.[101] Firstly, there is more to place brands than attractive messages, logos or slogans (Medway et al 2015), since place brands are 'the perception of a place by external and internal audiences […] based on the projected physical and psychological peculiarities of a place' (Sevin 2011, p.159). Therefore, the complex nature of places challenges the application of corporate principles of marketing and branding to territories (Anholt 2008a; Ashworth 1993; Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2009; Giovanardi et al. 2013; Govers 2013; Govers & Go 2009; Kavaratzis 2007; Lucarelli & Broström 2013; Van Ham 2002). Secondly, the complex relationship between multiple and diverse stakeholders in place branding inevitably brings about contestation and antagonisms that lead to different and often competing discourses about a place (Beckmann & Zenker 2012; Olins 2004). The dynamic nature of places is inextricably linked to the desire of their societies to move in a certain direction and, as a result, branding can often influence governments' management and organisation of places (Ooi 2011). This complexity has supported the conceptualisation of place branding as a process:[102]

> [Place is] absolutely not static. If places can be conceptualised in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions themselves are not motionless things, frozen in time. They are processes. (Massey 1994, p. 147).[103]

There is therefore a need to clarify and conceptualise the processes of constitution, negotiation or contestation of place identity (Kalandides 2011a) in relation to space and time constructs (Castells 1997). Similarly, Campelo suggests a reconceptualisation of place branding that encompasses *local communities* as interactions of people and environment, *habitus* as one's and others' perceptions of place, and unique *sense of place* or reproductions of individual and collective perceptions of place (2015, p. 51).[104]

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[101] For more information, see Aitken and Campelo (2011), Kalandides (2011a), Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013), Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) and Mayes (2008).

[102] For instance, Kalandides (2011a) builds on Massey's concept of 'sense of place', particularly on the lack of boundaries, the multiplicity of identities and conflicts that occur in places, within the power flows and people's interconnections to reflect on the particularities of the place branding process.

[103] Kalandides (2011a) also builds on Läpple's 'Essay about space' to argue that there is a regulative system of places, in which power relationships affect the system of signs, symbols and representations linked to the place. Kalandides (ibid) also refers to sociologist Löw's observations of the constitution of places through spacing (positioning places in recognisable symbolic systems) and synthesising (sum of perceptions, imagination and memory that affect the identities of places). These processes can be observed in processes of urban renewal leading to physical but also, social change, in which places are open systems affected by broader relations in an ever-changing process of reinterpretation and renewal (ibid).

[104] For Campelo et al, *sense of place* determines the uniqueness of a place, and includes the following elements: time, ancestry, landscape and community (2013).

Early literature on urban policy was concerned with the manipulation of identities, and the 'commodification' of the culture of places (Urry 1990). However, the fabrication of identities in the form of city images for marketing purposes could affect local identities negatively and can result in counter-narratives in media representations of place (Kalandides 2011a; Kavaratzis 2007).[105]

Place branding practices can alter cultural meaning to manage place images and identities (Jensen 2007), since creating versions of place 'realities' as branding tools to increase competitiveness risks affecting the existing and unique nature of place entities:

> […] place branding campaigns, in an effort to project one universal reality (or hyperreality) of the place product to relevant audiences, often end up suppressing (albeit unintentionally), a place's eclecticism and natural distinctiveness. In truth, places typically remain much more disordered in the way they serve the needs of their consumers, in essence performing the oft-cited 'place marketing' role of being multisold at one and the same time to multiple audiences (Medway & Warnaby 2014, p. 164).

'The construction of such places, the fashioning of some localised aesthetic image, allows the construction of some limited and limiting sense of identity in the midst of a collage of imploding spatialities' (Harvey 1989, p. 115). For instance, whereas urban planning is concerned with the creation of consumer-oriented and uniform representations of place, place branding often responds to particular stakeholder interests and is often used to legitimise urban interventions (Colomb 2011; Evans 2003; Greenberg 2000, 2008). Identities that are authentic and sincere (Ooi 2011), however, are 'constructed through historical, political, religious and cultural discourses; through local knowledge, and influenced by power struggles' (Govers & Go 2009, p.17). Consequently, there is extensive debate about the possibility and limitations of branding for places, as well as associated ethical issues, since particular centralised imposed narratives might hinder the uniqueness of places (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Ooi 2011; Pasquinelli 2010; Sevin 2011; Warnaby & Medway 2013).[106]

If this perspective is adopted, then place identity cannot be fully realised unless civil society, community groups and other stakeholders are not included in the process (Garcia et al 2012).[107]

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[105] See, for instance, Hansen (2010) on narratives about place affecting place branding practice; McGaurr et al (2015) on the media politics of branding 'wilderness'; Lichrou et al (2010) on local narratives and destination branding; and Warnaby and Medway (2013) on place narratives and the dangers of constructing place identities. Furthermore, as noted in Chapter Two, different geographical identities require adapted place branding processes (Warnaby et al 2010).
[106] The ambiguous nature of the concept of place identity is linked to inextricable issues of legitimacy and efficiency of place branding in which branding becomes a visionary undertaking that could bring about societal change through a fluctuating and continuous process (Ooi 2011).
[107] Hudson et al (2016) reflected on this lack of engagement in practice through a case study of a bottom-up process of brand development in the US, advocating for a community-based place brand development model, also based on the co-creation paradigm, to conclude that place branding should be appropriately researched and planned, as well as incorporated in economic and also community development plans.

Place branding as a process of constructing and communicating place identities, needs to move from a consultative process to a multi-layered engagement strategy, in which locals, public and private sectors, and even foreign audiences collectively make place (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2012; Therkelsen & Halkier 2008). The following sections further elaborate this new highlighting of the multi-layered nature of brands and contrasting conceptualisations of place brands as networks of associations with brands as cultural and social constructs co-created in the public sphere.

3.4 Brand as cultural assemblage

> *Place branding and marketing must be seen as truly creative rather than mechanical, formulaic processes. Policy-makers should not simply be exploiting cultural resources as tools for achieving non-cultural goals, but should let their own mindsets and assumptions be transformed by contact with the rich and ever-changing detail of local culture.*
>
> *(Bianchini & Ghilardi 2007, p. 285)*

In a review of the apparent 'complex and reciprocal relationship' between place culture and place brands, Kavaratzis and Ashworth suggested a theoretical framework based on an 'internally-focused, collective exercise' consisting of three solutions to the homogenisation of culture by place brands, namely, 'to use culture as a connecting link between the place brand and locals', addressing culture '*in, for* and *of* the place' and to consider 'place brands as cultural resources' (2015, p.169-170).[108] Their study responds to their realisation of the important interaction between culture and place brands, consisting of culture as enabler of brands and their concern around place branding as a process of cultural commodification (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2015). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2015) highlight the role of culture as a link between residents, place and brand and the tensions associated to using culture for place branding. Their examination of how people encounter and experience places and place brands, and how place brand associations are consequently formed based on the culture of the place follows a similar logic to the approach suggested in this research, based on an observation of co-creative communication processes underlying place identities (see Figure 9).

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[108] Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2015) argue that culture is often 'hijacked' to serve the purposes of urban elites, with little citizen participation, which leads to a disconnection between the branded place, the co co-creators and the brand managers. Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2014) also observed different reasons in the use of culture in place branding, including the capacity to produce products and experiences that could support economic development, its magnet effect for attracting both tourists and the 'creative class' and its important as a vehicle to express the local character of places.

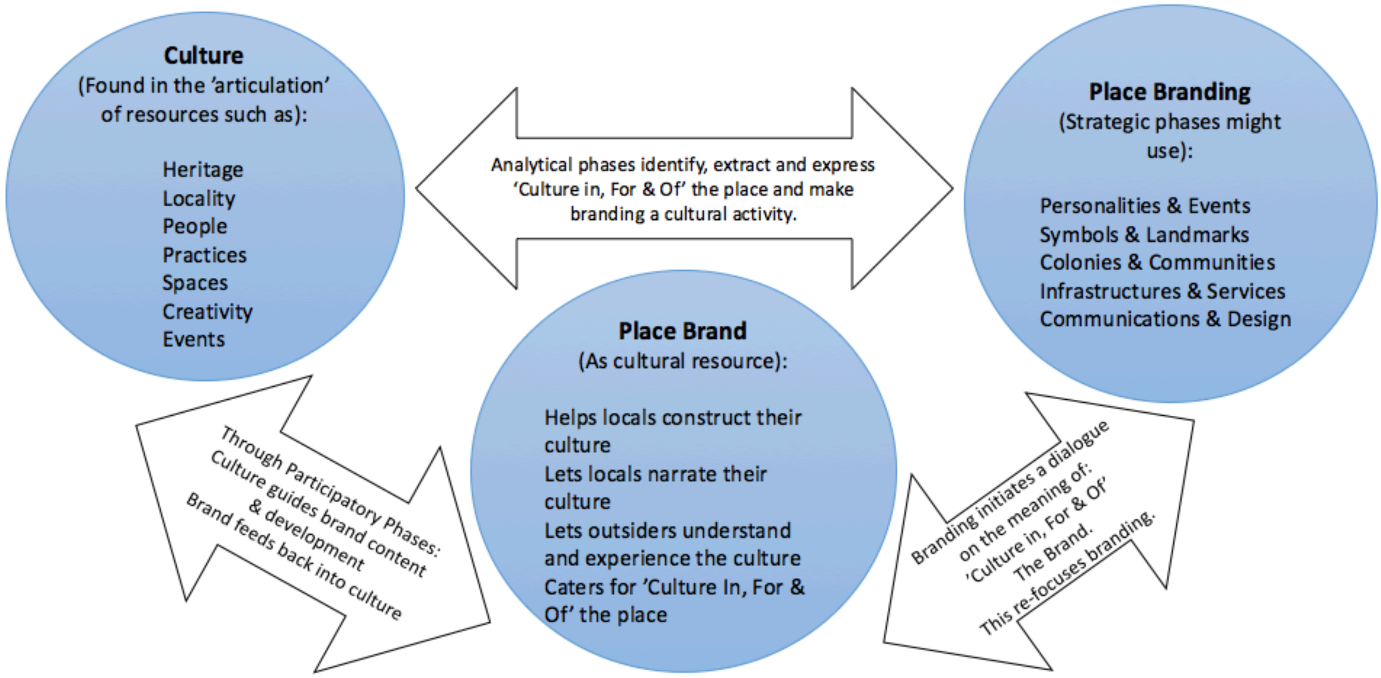

Figure 9. The Complex Relationship between Place Branding and Culture. Adapted from Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2015, p. 170).

Similarly, Lury (2009) argued that place brands are co-created and mediated through exchanges of meaning, understanding branding as a process of assembling culture and brand as heterogeneous, 'multi-leveled ontology –including a technical or physical support, and a set of conventions that articulate or work on that support, and image or logo', formed through two-way processes of mediation (2009, p. 67-68). In brand culture, cross-cultural and historical perspectives can also create alternative views of the brand (Kapferer 2006).[109] Brands therefore respond to evolving narratives emerging from 'dispersed networks of users, producers and other agents' whose formulations have also an impact in the public sphere (Cayla & Arnould 2008, p. 99).[110] In this sense it is useful to reflect on Appadurai's analysis of difference in the global cultural economy through a critical view of global cultural processes, where '[t]he image, the imagined, the imaginary – these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes: the imagination as a social practice' (1996, p. 31). Appadurai furthermore

[109] Brands are therefore affected by continued tensions between consensus and conflict, in a collective process in which consumers can be both managers and popular culture intermediaries (Holt 2003).
[110] Giovanardi (2011) observed personality-place (brand) associations, primarily for tourism purposes through a study of links between painter Raphael and the Italian city of Urbino, reporting an impressive response by residents, embracing promotional efforts highlighting local culture and heritage.

posits that the overlap of cultures and irregular coverage of 'terrestrial spaces' is one of the challenges of global cultural flows (1996). From the above, a focus on the cultural aspects of place brands warrants greater involvement by the local community (Giovanardi 2011).

Although cultural experiences are an inherent part of how place brands, images and representations of places form in the minds of consumers, they can often result in a loss of cultural diversity for the place (Evans 2003; Ooi 2004).[111] In this sense 'culture-led, experience-oriented policymakers' have been concerned with 'selective storytelling, or attempts to re-imagine the city' (Jensen 2007, pp. 212-213), conscious of the risk of commodification of both culture and place in place branding (Jansen 2008; Kaneva & Popescu 2011; Kavaratzis & Ashworth).[112] Bianchini and Ghilardi, from a cultural planning perspective, reinforce the need to build place brands on local cultural resources, describing cities, among other things, as 'a community of people, with particular social networks and dynamics' where place branding becomes 'a process of dialogue and collaboration between all those that have a stake in the future of the city' (2007, pp. 281, 283).[113] Cayla and Arnould explore the differences of brand cultures in different geographies and institutional frameworks to argue that social networking and consumer-driven marketing are proof that 'creation of brand meaning is increasingly collective and dynamic', and 'combine various frames of reference–local, micro regional, national, macro regional, and global' (2008, p. 106).[114] Building on these concepts, the next section examines how brands are co-created by different stakeholders in the process of place branding.

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[111] Appadurai reflects on the concepts of homogenisation and heterogenisation of culture in the global cultural economy and the resulting 'commodization' of culture (1996).

[112] Murray (2001), in fact, rejects the possibility of crafting identities for places due to the nature of places as complex and multi-faceted cultural entities. In the case of nation branding, Varga (2013) builds on Williams to argue that cultural policy measures often aim to 'unify' the nation, thus imposing 'a particular social order', through inner-oriented cultural-political policy.

[113] In their review of cultural approaches to place branding, Bianchini and Ghilardi (2007) introduce the concept of *mindscape* as a structure that brings together the physical landscapes and people's (locals and external audiences) visual and cultural perceptions about cities. Bianchini and Ghilardi (ibid) introduce mechanisms, such as the 'City Planning Forum' or 'Build Love Dialogue' as consultative platforms to look into the cultural character of places based on collective knowledge about place. Through mapping place's strengths, Bianchini and Ghilardi (ibid) offer a new approach to local development through which the aspirations and needs of locals are translated in innovative actions in a participatory, flexible and democratic way.

[114] Cayla and Arnould further argue that 'to talk of brands as cultural forms is to acknowledge that branding is a specific form of communication' (2008, p. 88). In their review of cultural branding Cayla and Arnould argue that the way we interpret brands is a Western-based conception or imaginary based on an individualistic take on society, and that a cultural approach to international branding is made of the sum of relationships between individuals and societies. Marketing scholars, therefore, need to observe place brands and branding as socio-cultural phenomena.

3.5 The layering of place brands: brands as networks of associations

[Place brands form] in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, behaviour and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design.

(Zenker & Braun 2010, p. 5)

The communication of place brands is subject to the complexities of the context of the place and the representation of place in the minds of consumers, the media and the public sphere. Consequently, place brands can be difficult to control (Kavaratzis 2004) and in place branding there is no one-size-fits-all (Zenker & Beckmann 2013a). Beyond networks of associations in the minds of individuals (Keller 1993), a brand is defined as a 'multidimensional construct, consisting of functional, emotional, relational and strategic elements that collectively generate a unique set of associations in the public mind' (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2010, p. 4). The understanding of place brands as networks of associations (Kavaratzis 2004; Hildreth 2011) has led to a focus on the management of brand perceptions or reputations (Anholt 2010; Zenker 2011).[115] However, brand associations exist in networks 'in a state of constant flux as they interact with each other in complementary or conflicting manners' (Kavaratzis & Kalandides, p. 1,371; Zenker & Beckmann 2013a).

A place brand is composed of the symbolic interaction between different stakeholders and different discourses that characterise the place (Lury 2009).[116] Through 'direct' and 'mediated' experiences by different actors, (place) brand associations become widespread as collective perceptions of spatial representations (Adams 2009). Given the intrinsic relationship between place brands, stakeholder identities and discourses about place, there is a need to observe the relationships underlying places as network of associations, including conflicting symbolic identity attributes (Hankinson, 2004; Hanna & Rowley 2015; Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015; Zenker & Beckmann 2013a). Subsequently, there have been several attempts to develop place branding models based on the relational aspects of places. These approaches argue for greater stakeholder involvement in the process of co-creation of place brands that I review in the next section (Rainisto 2003; Hankinson 2009).

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[115] Anholt (2010) understands reputations as positive, negative or neutral associations and perceptions of place brands.

[116] Lury (2004) emphasised brands as media, and the relational aspect of brands as complex and institutionalised constructs with multiple performative dimensions, that exist within their environment. This view differs from the use of use of the media as a tool to market or improve the reputation of places (Avraham 2004) in which the effect goes beyond the marketing campaign, to affect the construction of social identities.

3.6 Branding as a process of co-creation

The world society which, in the wake of globalisation, has taken shape in many (not only economic) dimensions is undermining the importance of the national state, because a multiplicity of social circles, communication networks, market relations and lifestyles, none of them specific to any particular locality, not cut across the boundaries of the national state

(Beck 2000, p.4)

In his review of the role of stakeholders in place branding practices, Kavaratzis (2012) turned scholarly attention to the links between place branding and the emerging marketing concept of co-creation, based on a service-dominant logic (SDL) of marketing highlighting the importance of intangible elements, relationships and exchange mechanisms of products (Warnaby 2009).[117] The SDL of marketing posits that brands are based on consumers' unique experiences rather than emotions or imagery (Vargo & Lusch 2004, 2008) and has been at the heart of the concepts of co-creation of brands (Hatch & Schultz 2012).[118] This conception echoes Ashworth's emphasis on the role of consumers as creators of the place product through their experiences of the place (1993) and I therefore argue that the co-creation paradigm in turn leads to the conceptualisation of place brands as networks, focusing on the social structures in which place brands are communicated. For instance, as introduced above, from a brand communications perspective, Lury (2004) reflects on the symbolic meaning of brands in the social network as 'new media objects' supporting multichannel communication flow. In turn, Pasquinelli, in her study of region branding, draws from the theory of relationship marketing as 'a marketing perspective on the network organisation and the network society' (Gummesson 2002, p. 293 in Pasquinelli 2011, p. 233) to emphasise the importance of relationships and place identity, as well as mutual exchanges of information. Such exchanges add to social capital, or the intangible aspects of the economy that support economic development (Lee et al 2005), and the interactions also build community through sustained dialogue (Pasquinelli 2011).[119]

In order to frame stakeholder interactions in the co-creation process of formation of place identity, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) adapted Hatch and Shultz's model of organisational identity dynamics to place brands (see Figure 10).[120] This process reflects on the interactions

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[117] See also Hankinson's conceptual model of place brand as relationships and place branding as 'coordinated process' rather than a managerial enterprise (2004, p.112, see Chapter Two, Figure 4, p.24).

[118] Vargo and Lusch (2008) argue that marketing practices have moved from a goods-dominant to a service-dominant (SDL) view and that, in the process of adding value to the product, consumers are co-producers of the service, they are active participants of the process of co-production through relational exchanges of places as tangible and at the same time intangible goods.

[119] In relationship marketing, actors relate in a network of formal and informal relationships. See Gumesson (2002) for a review of relationship marketing.

[120] Hatch and Schultz studied identity as a dynamic process, consisting of four processes that 'link identity, culture and image': mirroring (the process by which identity is mirrored in the images of others); reflecting (the process by which identity is embedded in cultural understandings); expressing (the process by which culture makes itself known

between stakeholders and is divided into four main activities in a constant continuum: expressing the culture of the place; reflecting new understandings of the place culture; impressing images of the place in others; and mirroring expectations of the place by others (see Figure 10 below).

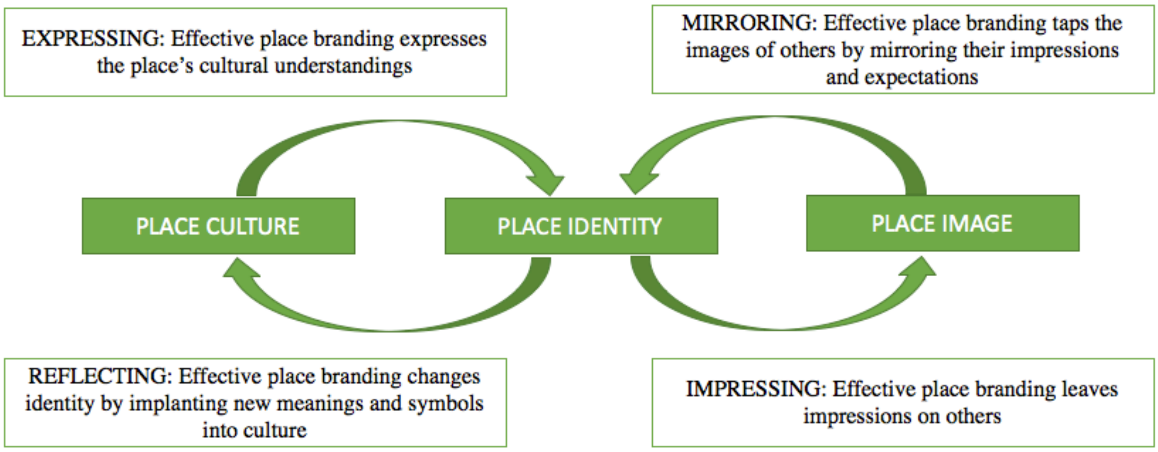

Figure 10. Place Branding and the Identity Process. Adapted from Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013, p. 80).

Similarly, Aitken and Campelo emphasise the importance of the process of co-creation as well as the integrative role of brands, since both cultures and people live and create brand identities (2011). Place brands as intangible assets are centred around many stakeholders, all of them having a key role in place branding (Braun et al 2013; Houghton & Stevens 2011; Warnaby 2009). I argue here that the complex nature of place brands is therefore based on their construction as systems of meanings about the place.

Aitken and Campelo observe brand-consumer dialogue through 'brand architecture, brand governance and brand ownership', and the extension of the latter in the conception of places as socially constructed identities (2011, p. 914):[121]

> Brand meanings are constantly co-created and re-presented by the community, reflecting, as it does, the everyday experience of its constituents. The resulting brand essence is dynamic, authentic, and, most importantly, collective. The adoption of the paradigm of co-creation not only helps to reveal the ethos of the place in terms of symbols, meanings, and attributes that shape place identity, but also reveals the place's ethos in terms of practices, ways of doing things, and social order. Both aspects are likely to influence brand sustainability and authenticity. Therefore, the development of a brand strategy based on a co-created experience empowers the community with decisions around

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through identity claims); and impressing (the process by which expressions of identity leave impressions on others)' (2002, p. 99).

[121] Aitken and Campelo (2011) analyse the interactions and interrelationships between people and place in the co-creation and communication of place brands, and the management of place branding strategies.

> brand positioning, representation, brand governance, and brand ownership (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 927).[122]

The construction of a collective identity or 'sense of place' also requires an understanding of the differences between territorial and spatial identities, and the many layers of territorial-administrative systems (Boisen et al 2011), as well as the interrelations between the local and global spheres (de San Eugenio Vela 2013).[123] Effective place branding is understood as 'identity-based' place branding:

> Effective place branding will be capable of capturing and articulating many different perceived characteristics about the place and in this way also provides a tool for reflecting on cultural understandings and placing these reflections into the identity conversation (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013, p. 79).

In sum, both functional (or physical) and symbolic aspects of places need to be integrated in the branding process (Kavaratzis 2004). The role of social agents in representing 'sense of place' needs to be considered based on the physical and social dimensions of places in relation to other places (Allen et al 1998). The concept of 'sense of place' supports the authentic and unique characteristics of places (Campelo 2015; Campelo et al 2013; Kalandides 2011a).[124] The culture and lifestyle of local communities represented in the place identity as 'ethos of the place', understood as a continuum of interactions and relationships between people and their *habitus* or place (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 919). If places are conceived as ever-changing sums of symbolic and intangible associations in 'the space of flows', participation and interaction should determine place branding success (Govers & Go 2009).

3.7 Place brands as networks: organisational mechanisms and structures

Following the logic of co-creation from the service-dominant (SDL) logic of marketing introduced above, I argue that relational exchanges occur between consumers, place marketers or managers, and other members of the branding network (Short & Kim 1999 in Warnaby 2009a;

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[122] From a tourism perspective, Therkelsen presents a communicative approach to place branding based on the dialogue with consumers, increasing their sense of agency in the place branding process. There are potential parallels to be drawn between the realisation of the importance of consumers as co-creators of brands, and the role of residents as both internal consumers and 'enablers' of the brand promise. For more, see Therkelsen (2015).

[123] De San Eugenio Vela (2013) applies the framework of environmental communication to explain how global contemporary society engages in a transformational process of 'interpretation' that converts geographical space into brands. De San Eugenio Vela argues that the role of place brands is the creation of '*a priori* perceptions of certain spaces' (ibid, p. 255), and that spatial consumption of place in postmodern society starts with the experience of ideas about places. De San Eugenio Vela (ibid) draws on the concept of brand experience to reflect on the communicative experience between individuals and geographical spaces to argue the construction of places as spatial social identities, and reflect on the role of mass media in the mediatisation of the environment or through Thomashow's concept of 'ecological identity'.

[124] Sense of place includes the physical dimensions and social constructions of residents as well as cultural exchanges in the place community (Relph 1976).

Van Den Berg & Braun 1999).[125] The interactions and relationships within network structures are part of 'many-to-many' marketing (networks that include consumers, citizens and employees) that allow 'complexity, context and dynamism' (Gummesson p. 349).[126] Consequently, stakeholder management has then become an increasingly important area for research in the management of place brands (Dinnie 2008; Hankinson 2010a; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008; Pike 2009). Although often co-branding practices in light of particular opportunities or interests are perceived to result in more effective brand strategies (Cleave & Arku 2014; Dinnie 2008), there is a management challenge in the mediation of conflict around particular interests and expectations, since place brands rely on multiple stakeholders to deliver the brand promise or experience (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008; Hankinson 2004, 2007).

Although it is out of the scope of this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge that place brands exist in relation or interaction with other place brands representing other spatial identities, often forming networks of brands or umbrella brands.[127] In this sense, Pasquinelli (2015) defines the *network* as a collaborative or relational space surrounding the branded entity, a dynamic and interactive space with diffuse physical boundaries, differing from closed political and administrative units. This conceptualisation leads to the importance of observing governance in the co-creation process of place brands. This thesis argues that a framework focusing on participatory governance, responding to existing network structures and communication patterns can support greater collaboration in place branding processes.

From a governance perspective, O'Toole defines networks as interdependent structures which involve several organisations or minor bodies, in a non-hierarchical or subordinate form (1997b, p. 45; 2014).[128] In the instances where traditionally public managers have been in charge of

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[125] In the context of city marketing, van den Berg and Braun refer to the structure in which exchanges occur as 'strategic network', whereas Short and Kim (in Warnaby 2009a) adopt a 'political economy' perspective of place marketing, emphasising both the complex organisational structure of place marketing and the contested agendas of multiple stakeholders from different sectors (private, public and voluntary). For a more detailed review place marketing, see Warnaby (2009a).

[126] In his review of the application of the S-D logic to places, Warnaby (2009a) argues that places can be understood as service systems integrated by both physical and social resources, thus integrating the idea of places as goods and services (experiences) and the different conceptions of marketing places based on their nature as products. Warnaby (2009a) also draws from Brodie et al's model of service brand-relationship-value triangle, linking brands, value creating and relationships, in his service-dominant logic model of place brands.

[127] Boisen et al, however, argue that '[i]t has become unfeasible to see the national brand as an umbrella brand for the regions and the regions as umbrella brands for their cities. The hierarchy is not straightforward, and in acquisition not always even instrumental' (2011, p. 145), since the different levels overlap, contradict and are spatially inconsistent with place brands. Boisen et al (2011) express great concerns about the effects of the different organisational goals of the nodes of the network of places that form umbrella place brands, arguing and inherent selectivity in the layering of spatial identities.

[128] Networks add a layer of structural complexity, but do not replace bureaucratic organisations. O'Toole (1997) outlined the importance of networks for the field of public administration and set forth a research agenda in his ground breaking article 'Treating Networks Seriously: Practical and Research-Based Agendas in Public Administration'. In 2014, O'Toole published a review of research on the field, advocating for more attention to social network analysis, to assist the understanding of network characteristics and policy networks.

managing multi-organisational efforts, networks provide alternative governance arrangements through contacts with a range of organisations and institutions (O'Toole 2014, pp. 361-362). Consequently, brand managers should not be the only decision-makers, but should instead act as facilitators of dialogue about the place brand by devoting resources to stakeholder participation and two-way communication, supporting a reciprocal relationship between trust, communication, cooperation and performance (Kavaratzis 2012, p. 16; Seppänen et al 2007). Brand management is then about building trust in the network (Jacobsen 2009).[129]

Despite ample debate on network effectiveness (Provan & Milward 1995, 2001), the literature on networks in public administration emphasises the collaborative aspect of networks and their benefits for problem solving and conflict management in regions or communities (Agranoff 2012; Agranoff & McGuire 2003). 'Networks can be influential in shaping the processes, outputs, and outcomes of public action' (O'Toole 2014, p. 364). Multiple actors collaborate through networks to solve collective action problems, particularly in self-organising systems, and share resources to achieve common goals (Ostrom 2005).[130]

Network analysis can provide insights into an alternative way of social coordination in a globalised and intercommunicated world and into their 'protocols of communication' that determine the rules to be accepted once in the network (Castells 2011, p. 775).[131] Social network analysis, in particular, measures and represents structural relations, their reason of being and outcomes accurately (Scott 2012). 'Network analysis explicitly assumes that actors participate in social systems connecting them to other actors, whose relations comprise important influences on one another's behaviours' (Knoke & Yang 2008, p. 3).[132]

Network analysis in the field of place branding has been centred on consumer perceptions of place brands. The analysis stresses brand perceptions by different target groups (Zenker & Beckman 2013), and is based on Keller's (1993) conceptualisation of brands as networks of associations in the minds of consumers. However, it fails to recognise a certain degree of

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[129] For instance, Jacobsen analysed the concept of brand equity from an investor-based place brand equity framework, and introduced the functions of place brands that support investment by Meffert, namely confidence building, symbolic and orientation and information enabling the consumer to identify faster and better with the product (2009, p. 74).

[130] Ostrom (2005) draws from the literature of public administration to study how actors can collaborate towards a common goal, outside the government-organising system.

[131] Those rules form the standards of the network since 'governments themselves are connected in complex networks of imperfect global governance conditioned by the pressures of business and interest groups, obliged to negotiate with the media that translate government actions for their citizenries, and periodically assailed by social movements and expressions of resistance' (Castells 2011, p. 776).

[132] Knoke and Yang (2008) focus on *structural relations* as a key principle for social network analysis. The method might seem relevant for analysing stakeholder interactions in place branding, since it offers explanations to social action and illuminates the motives and consequences of the behaviour of different actors (ibid). Hence, in the dynamic process of branding places, it makes sense to observe how '[s]ocial networks affect perceptions, beliefs, and actions through a variety of structural mechanisms that are societally constructed by relations among entities' (ibid, p. 4).

interaction and change as those place brands are constantly experienced and reimagined (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015, p. 1,375).[133] Similarly, in her review of the public diplomacy network structure, Zaharna argues that social network analysis has focused on the individual level by mapping out the network of an individual node (consumer) and its pattern of ties or relations, and arguing that a 'whole-network' level of analysis is needed (Zaharna 2014, p.178).

Network analysis then responds to a sociological understanding of networks (Castells 2013), where the unit of observation are the nodes or actors, and the study of networks is based on an observation of relations or interactions between actors (Knoke 1990). The study of networks as forms of governance, however, views networks as coordination tools of which the unit of analysis is the network itself (Provan & Kenis 2007) and the focus is on the governance and management of networks as social organisation arrangements (O'Toole 1997).[134] In this research, I focus on observing the whole of the network and the patterns of interaction, articulating the conditions necessary for such interaction to function effectively in place branding processes.

In light of the reflections above, I argue that embedded in the process of negotiating meaning about the place there are issues of governance since determining what the place is (identity) and what it wants to be (vision) will inform issues of development. Branding becomes not only a tool for communication and promotion, but a mechanism for regional development and a deliberation process rather than just a marketing exercise. The disciplines of public administration, governance, politics, sociology and place branding have provided great insight into the concept of networks as replacement for hierarchical or bureaucratic structures to respond to increasingly complex issues affecting territories. The concept of network allows relationships between otherwise independent or disconnected actors and is further analysed in Chapter Four. In the next sections I review the connection between the network and governance concepts, to argue that policy networks are useful as superior governance arrangements for place branding. Policy networks sit at the intersection of management and policy arenas at supranational, national and regional levels, and respond to changes in the interdependent environment of public organisations, in which governments are pushing for regulated forms of network administration to deliver public services (O'Toole 2014; Scharpf 1993). Although networks are not the only alternative to collaborative arrangements they can bring stakeholders together towards collective policy objectives (Agranoff 2006). In fact, contemporary public administrators work in networks

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[133] Similarly, Snow argues for targeting messages to publics in public diplomacy since '[i]n global communications, ideas matter. But ideas alone can't make any measurable difference if they are not properly marketed to an audience, be they consumers or citizens' (2014, p. 64).

[134] Powell (1990) argues, however, that networks can be understood as a combination of market and hierarchies or as distinct forms of governance.

involving a range of organisations that affect governance and the effectiveness of management and policy (O'Toole 2014).[135] The overview provided above acknowledges that networks, however are not exempt of conflict, and do not always lead to success (O'Toole & Meier 2004).

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the dynamic nature of place brands linked to processes of creation of meaning through communication in the network society. I argued the horizontal character of the process of co-creation of place identities embedded in place branding and the need for alternative governance arrangements to support greater stakeholder engagement reflecting participation in the communicative procss. Chapter Four further explores network governance, and in particular policy networks as more effective governance arrangements for co-creation of place identities, arguing the need for holistic and participatory approaches to branding places.

[135] Managers. however, face many challenges in dealing with self-organised and emergent network models of organisation (Provan & Lemaire 2012).

CHAPTER FOUR: PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES: CO-CREATING PLACE BRANDS

4.1 Overview

[…] stakeholder involvement diminishes the veto power by stakeholders, and contributes to democratic quality of decision making with results in brand communities with stronger brands.

(*Klijn et al 2012, p. 504)*

Since places are dynamic entities, their social and economic development is constantly affected by a multiplicity of factors. The development of a common vision, the management of the decision-making process, and the assessment of outcomes have been identified as the key challenges in the application of branding strategies to places (see also Stubbs & Warnaby 2015). Place identities are, in this sense, a reflection of the challenges places face and are not easily changed to serve political interests or those of the elites (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015; Colomb 2011).[136] The previous chapters outlined important issues in place branding, including: the lack of a clear purpose or conceptual framework (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009; Lucarelli & Berg 2011), issues around commodification of places and place culture (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2015), and ethical dilemmas around place (Medway & Warnaby 2014; Sevin 2011). The prevalence of top-down approaches to branding places is well recognised in the literature (Bennet & Savani 2003; Braun et al 2013; Houghton & Stevens 2011; Merrilees et al 2012), as is the need for more bottom up and/or participatory approaches (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Hudson et al 2016; Kavaratazis 2016; Zouganeli et al 2012). This chapter analyses advancements in public administration, governance and place branding literatures towards more participatory and inclusive processes to support a long-term vision for place, as a blueprint for social and economic development policies (Braun et al 2010; Warnaby 2009). This task, however, demands a more holistic approach to the management of identities (and images) of places, for which stakeholder engagement is key (Kalandides 2011b; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Ren & Blichfeldt 2011; Warnaby 2011; Zenker & Petersen 2014).

It has been argued that although place branding has found its place in place management as a new policy field, it seems to lack integration with other policy activities (Zenker & Erfgen 2014; Eshuis et al 2013). Such a disconnect seems to respond to the constraints of looking at places as marketable semi-static objects instead of dynamic, ever-changing, people-based entities. More

[136] This assertion is not limited to economic development issues or the corporate business, marketing and communications fields. From a public diplomacy perspective, it is argued that sub-national entities should be engaged in defining their roles and degrees of interaction in the process of nation branding, shifting to a relational model of public diplomacy in lieu of the traditional policy-driven practice responding to the strategic interests of the government of the time (Wang 2005).

specifically, the current chapter critically analyses the literature of network governance and policy networks, primarily from the fields of public administration and governance and its links to place branding (Klijn et al 1995; Kooiman 2003). The chapter also provides an account of a growing academic interest in 'participatory place branding' (Ind & Bjerke 2007; Gregory 2007; Hatch & Schultz 2008), and investigates the potential of policy networks as a framework in which stakeholder relationships and interactions can be further enhanced for the common goal of advancing places images and reputations (Ooi & Pedersen 2010).[137]

In this chapter I argue that to give effect to the multidisciplinary field of place branding (Chapter Two) given the complex nature of the place construct (Chapter Three), there is a need to focus on a governance approach that is best able to embrace the multiplicity of disciplinary perspectives and social positions involved in the co-creation of a place brand (Chapter Four). The chapter contributes to advancing academic debate on the existing process and structures for stakeholder engagement in place branding processes, and to inform practice by introducing policy networks as more open, horizontal and holistic platforms for interaction for the complex policy of place branding. Furthermore, the chapter provides the rationale for the exploration of an alternative participant-governed network model of place branding in the case study.

4.2 Who are the stakeholders in place branding?

Stakeholders feel more committed and loyal to a brand if they have been involved in the construction of the brand, because during their involvement they can influence the content of the brand.

(Eshuis & Klijn 2012, p. 151)

This section critically investigates the nature of stakeholder engagement in the traditional hierarchical top-down model of place branding. The critique addresses the need to reconsider the role of stakeholders 'towards a more participation and involvement-orientated practice', since current practices are restricted to consultative processes that 'pay lip service' to strategic branding processes (Aronczyk 2008; Kavaratzis 2012, p. 8). Here I propose that existing public management processes of place branding have to shift towards non-hierarchical models of governance (Bingham et al 2005), in which leadership is shared by different stakeholders, and place brand managers and consultants act primarily as facilitators of participatory forms of place branding (Kalandides 2011b).

Arguably, effective place branding and effective policymaking at large requires administrators and political leaders to interact with a network of stakeholders (Vangen & Huxham 2003; Ind &

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[137] Ooi and Pedersen explore the complementary character of stakeholder relations in the city branding of Copenhagen, Denmark, reflecting on the different agendas that result in complementary, rather than symbiotic relationships among stakeholders (2010, p. 317).

Bjerke 2007; Koppenjan & Klijn 2004). The stakeholder composition of the place branding network, however has been debated. For instance, Zenker and Beckman (2013), from an urban management perspective, focus on the different perceptions of place between target audiences in place branding and build on Kotler et al (1993) to divide accordingly place stakeholders or targets into visitors, residents and workers, alongside business and industry as main stakeholders in place branding.[138] Hanna and Rowley, from a strategic management stance, offer a more holistic group of stakeholders involved in place branding processes that include 'marketing professionals, citizens, visitors, and a range of other stakeholders' (2011, p. 463).[139] Eshuis et al, in their study of place marketing as a governance strategy state that in practice the perceptions about 'aims, strategies and target groups of place marketing campaigns' vary from the multiple public and private parties involved (2013, p. 508). Drawing from Hankinson's concept of place brand as a 'relational brand network', Andersson and Ekman understand that exchanges of meaning about place are aimed at value creation through relationships 'between the place and all stakeholders, including residents, employees of local organisations, key community stakeholders, consumers and the media' (2009, p. 44).[140]

Academic debate on place branding has emphasised the need for a more holistic and inclusive approach to managing the image of places based on two-way, horizontal communication and collaboration networks (Kavaratzis 2012). Accordingly, in order to advance the development of more inclusive models, the roles and levels of engagement of different stakeholders in place branding processes need to be identified (Kalandides 2011; Zaharna et al 2014). The actors involved or affected by place branding practices have been mainly referred to in the literature as stakeholders (Anholt 2006; Govers & Go 2009; Kavaratzis 2012). This argument draws from the field of strategic management, which provides a widely-accepted definition of stakeholder as 'any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives' (Freeman 1984, p. 46). In management theory, engaging stakeholders is key since 'long-term profitability is a by-product of a well-run company that effectively engages with its stakeholders' (Strand & Freeman 2015, p. 67). In addition, stakeholders have legitimate interests in the success of organisations (Donaldson & Preston 1995). Freeman's (1984) definition,

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[138] Kotler et al's research on place marketing aims to 'promote a place's values and image so that potential users are fully aware of its distinctive advantages' (1993, p.18).

[139] De Nisco et al (2008) identify stakeholders according to their relationship with the organisation, and thus refers to them as primary and secondary stakeholder groups. Primary stakeholders have formal, official, or contractual relationships and have a direct and necessary economic impact upon the organisation (typically shareholders and investors, employees, customers and suppliers), and include public stakeholder (the governments and communities that provide infrastructure and market), whilst secondary stakeholders are those who influence or affect the organisation, or who are influenced or affected by it, but are not engaged in transactions with the organisation and are not essential for its survival (ibid, pp. 169-170).

[140] Furthermore, despite a general tendency to overlook its role in amplifying brand messages, since the media take a scrutiniser role in governance practices, it is relevant to note their role within the branding network (Klijn 2016).

however, observes stakeholders as passive subjects 'affected by' decisions, but not necessarily active decision-makers.[141] The construction of the place brand becomes then a matter of managing the network of actors (Eshuis & Klijn 2012, p. 116). As such, 'strategic network' then refers to the group of stakeholders involved in the city branding process (Van Den Berg and Braun 1999).

Considering a networked model requires a close examination of the roles and definitions of stakeholders in the network setup. In fact, the units of analysis within the network vary within each domain: 'nodes are individuals that operate within policy networks' and 'ties are most often defined as "frequent interactions" or "actors in games", but rarely operationalised or empirically measured' (Lecy et al 2014, p. 654).[142] Social structures can be represented as networks or sets of *nodes* (members of the social system), and sets of *ties* providing interconnections (Castells 2008). These *nodes* are commonly referred to as stakeholders in the governance, public diplomacy and place branding literatures (Hankinson 2003; Kavaratzis 2011; Zaharna et al 2014). Although the dynamics of space and place affect participation in networks, they are not however, exempt from conflict and particular interests (Bennett & Savani 2003; Colomb 2011; Houghton & Stevens 2011; Olsson & Berglund 2009).

In the study of stakeholder roles in place branding, power relations have arguably received scant attention (Bellini et al 2010). Power thus needs to be observed to understand the extent to which new spaces for participatory governance can be used for transformative engagement, or whether they are more likely to be instruments for reinforcing domination and control (Gaventa 2004, p. 34). Within this contest, power is understood as the 'the degree to which conflict over key issues and the voices of key actors are visible in given spaces and places', and can be social, political and economic (Gaventa 2004, p. 36-37).[143]

Furthermore, whilst place branding scholars and practitioners have recognised the need for greater community and stakeholder engagement (Hankinson 2007; Iversen & Hem 2008; Moilanen & Rainisto 2009), scholars are yet to develop models that adequately accommodate the complexity associated with multiple place brand owners at all stages of brand development,

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[141] From a sociological perspective, linked to the theory of the network society and interactive communication, Knoke and Yang define *actor* as an individual natural person or collectivity (groups or organisations) and their *relations* as a specific kind of contact, connection or tie between a pair of actors than can be directed or non-directed (coincidental), that would only exist so long as there is an association or common purpose between actors (2008, p. 4). This dichotomy highlights the need to establish a common purpose that unites stakeholders' interests.
[142] Similarly, social networks have been defined as structures composed of a set of actors, some of whose members are connected by a set of one or more relations (Knoke & Yang 2008, p. 8).
[143] Gaventa builds on both Cornwall (2002) and Brock et al (2001) to suggest a continuum between closed, invited and created (organic) spaces according to the degree of control in decision-making by public institutions, the latter emerging 'out of sets of common concerns linked to identity (2004).

from decision-making to strategising and implementation (Hanna and Rowley 2014, pp.108; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). Hence, Hankinson (2007, 2009) distinguishes in his *relational brand model* between place managers as providers of focus and strategy and other stakeholders.[144] Despite recognising the need to involve stakeholders, the traditional approach to stakeholder engagement in place branding thus seems to follow the interests of practitioners and governments, often leading to top-down and minimally participatory endeavours. Such observations have also been echoed in the fields of tourism and destination management. Byrd (2007) argues that stakeholders should be part of tourism development planning practices,[145] and Hanna and Rowley conclude that 'place branding, in contrast to corporate branding, is a collective phenomenon involving a number of stakeholders; Destination Management Organisations must consider how the multidimensionality of a place can be captured, through collaboration' (2014, p.103). In this context, stakeholders are considered as those individuals or groups 'directly influenced by the actions others take to solve a problem' (Gray 1989, p. 5). A participatory and networked approach to place branding unfolding logically from the conceptualisation of places as complex and multidimensional constructs with multiple identities is therefore gaining ground (Cresswell 2004; Govers & Go 2009; Ren & Blichfeldt 2011; Warnaby 2009a).

I define stakeholders as groups of individuals whose communicative interactions affect the process of formation of place identity, and further argue that they define their stance among each other in place brand governance through their discourses (Giovanardi 2014). Therefore, when analysing the interactions between stakeholders and the communicative aspects of the governance of place brands, 'power-geometries' or 'politics of space' and power disparities need to be considered (Massey 2004, 1992). In light of the above, the following section provides a more detailed account of challenges and issues around multi-stakeholder engagement, emphasising the institutional structures in which interactions occur.

[144] Hankinson's (2004) model conceptualises brand reality as a sum of tangible and intangible aspects, as well as institutional norms of places, thus emphasising the organisational and relational elements of brands. Similarly, Eshuis and Edwards, in their exploration of the connection between branding and urban governance concluded that 'although branding can potentially be a participatory process in which the feelings and emotions of citizens are included, this potential is not always fully realised in practice' (2013, p. 1,066).
[145] See also Byrd et al (2008).

4.2.1 Engaging stakeholders: a challenging affair

Unlike a product, service or organisation, nobody owns a country, region or a city.

(Boisen et al 2011, p. 140)

Place brands are co-created in the public realm and effective place branding requires co-operation and commitment from multiple stakeholders (Dinnie 2015; Della Corte & Aria 2014). As noted, a top-down approach presents numerous challenges. A bottom-up approach, however, presents particular challenges too often related to the differing interests and lack of consensus involved or a revision of ownership of place identities in the public sphere (Ooi & Pedersen 2010; Varga 2013).

Relational dynamics understood as the level of engagement between stakeholders are thus a key success factor (Rainisto 2003).[146] In particular, rethinking the dynamics of place branding processes requires an analysis of the role of indirect stakeholders, such as residents or civil society in the implementation of branding strategies (Argiolas et al 2009; Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker 2013; Klijn et al 2012). Hence, below I outline several aspects related to stakeholder interaction dynamics that merit further attention and analysis.

Firstly, if communication patterns in the networked society require new platforms for interaction when constructing and communicating meaning about places (Sevin 2016), there is a need to rethink ownership and the role of stakeholders in place branding from a social constructionist perspective since 'the control of brand meaning can be seen as the prerogative of the consumer who adds to it or not, reinforcing or changing the brand message through their use and experience of the brand' (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 914).[147] Since stakeholders are engaged in the communication of meaning about the place, and it is in the social context that place brands acquire meaning, ownership and management of place identity has to be shared (Sevin 2011). The issue of authority (Clegg & Kornberger 2010; Warnaby 2009) is particularly relevant to places, since the underlying political power dynamics affect the degree of stakeholder engagement (Sevin 2010; Govers & Go 2009).[148] Therefore, the proposed participant-governed network model requires (public) place managers to rethink their role and position of authority. However, place managers, mainly located in government and the public sector have traditionally

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[146] In their case study of the Italian city of Bevento, De Nisco et al (2008) reflect on the implementation of strategic planning processes to conclude that since different stakeholders have a variety of potentially contrasting interests, a more cooperative and collaborative approach is needed. De Nisco et al (ibid) suggest a stakeholder-based approach to Town Centre Management (TCM), in which they advocate for a broadening of stakeholder definition to include other individuals, and highlight the importance of public-private sector cooperation.

[147] From a spatial perspective see Cresswell (2004). See Chapter Three, and in particular Aitken and Campelo (2011) and Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) for a review of place brands as dynamic entities.

[148] Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) argue that places are about people and social relations. Place brands are therefore not about ownership, but about 'stakes'. For a review of stakeholders in place branding, see ibid (2015, pp. 101-118).

seen themselves as leaders of the place branding process and logically show reticence to change (Ind & Bjerke 2007). Similarly, often multiple and contested stakeholder interests cristalise in different understandings of successful place branding practices (Clegg & Kornberger 2010; Kotler et al 1999; Van den Berg & Braun 1999; Warnaby et al 2002). As a result, governments and public organisations often lead and manage place branding strategies based on their perceived political or bureaucratic authority as managers of resources of the place (Cleave & Arku 2014; Hanna & Rowley 2008). However, decision-making power needs to be distributed through the network at all levels (including residents), fostering a shared vision and (public-private) partnerships for effective place branding processes (De Nisco et al 2008; Stubbs & Warnaby 2015). Logically, a strong and coherent political vision underpinning the process will support the development of a common path and partnerships for place development (Pasquinelli 2014).[149]

It is therefore useful to resituate the debate of the communication of place identities within public diplomacy. Ideally, the 'focus is on the identification of policy objectives in specific areas and of "stakeholders" that possess interests and expertise related to them' (Hocking 2008, p. 64). Hocking (ibid) argues that the policy networks that form the network model of public diplomacy can help address complex policy issues and environments by enhancing trust, dialogue and communication. Similarly, 'grassroots public diplomacy projects [can be] introduced to create new platforms for interaction' (Sevin 2010; 2011, p. 162).

Among the issues that impede coordination between the various stakeholders, trust, lack of congruence, and limited resources are prominent (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). 'In the absence of a voluntarily cooperative history and in the context of the complexity of new public governance through networks, organizations might look for objective indications of trust, such as competences, to develop cognition-based trust' (Willem & Lucidarme 2014, p. 753). In this context, cognition-based trust refers to the professional status and competences of the organisations in collaborative networks (McAllister 1995). Again, these issues are in part due to power relations and their inherent associated tensions (Warnaby et al 2010).

Trust and reciprocity are also considered as core determinants of collective action (Ostrom in Araral 2014). Better communication helps foster trust, since 'partners build trust by sharing information and knowledge, demonstrating competency, good intentions, and follow through' which results in collective outcomes (Giest & Howlett 2013, p. 38). Trust is also often built

[149] Pasquinelli's (2012) research focuses on place brands as networks of brands in regional development practices characterised by a shift from competition to collaboration or co-opetition to collectively advance place development strategies. For a review of inter-regional practices and the concept of 'network brand', see Pasquinelli (2012).

through social capital, that is 'the glue for adaptive capacity and collaboration' (Folke et al 2005, p. 111).[150] Trust is therefore crucial to enhancing network performance for effective place branding practices, and could be achieved by focusing on long-term relations based on information and knowledge exchanges, as well as collaboration towards a mutual purpose (Van Ham 2008; Klijn et al 2012; Zenker & Martin 2010).[151]

Finally, the entrepreneurial form of governance that the neoliberal discourse of place branding adheres to can affect the interests of sections of stakeholders (Lucarelli & Hallin 2014). Political, economic or developmental interests can sometimes surpass those of communities (Bennet & Savani 2003). Moreover, often public interest is misrepresented in the planning process due to a lack of public engagement (Eshuis & Edwards 2012) and place branding is often criticised for its lack of social inclusion and democratic legitimacy (Eshuis & Edwards 2012; Kalandides 2011b; Paganoni 2012). The complex process of branding places involves several organisations and public-private stakeholder groups in constant interaction (Kavaratzis 2012). In this multi-party structure, multi-level governance can dilute branded messages and add to power struggles (Jessop 2005). Actually, this complexity is considered one of the major pitfalls for the application of corporate marketing and branding concepts in political and administrative contexts (Eshuis et al 2013). Furthermore, since place brands can also be considered as public assets, brand development is often financed by a range of stakeholders that expect a return in both economic and public value (Hankinson 2015). The process of value creation in place brands is 'more prone to conflict between stakeholder groups, each of whom has a vested interest in the brand's success, even though they do not share the PBO's [Public Branding Organisation] economic and welfare objectives' (Hankinson 2015, p. 25).

As a result, since territories have particular administrations and involve numerous stakeholders presenting a wide array of interests, managing places is a more complex task than managing products or companies (Pal & Sanders in De Nisco et al 2008 p.168). Organising capacity could be better achieved through a network structure including public, private and civil society actors, based on an integral vision or common purpose, support from political and societal circles, as well strong leadership (De Nisco et al 2008, p. 169; Hudson et al 2016; Pasquinelli 2015). Once

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[150] Folke et al (2005) introduce the concept of adaptative governance of social-ecological systems and investigate how governance connects individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions at multiple organisational levels. Their take on governance in socio-ecological systems has many common elements to the view of network governance in place branding proposed in this research. Adaptative governance systems often self-organise as social networks with teams and actor groups that draw on various knowledge systems and experiences for the development of a common understanding and policies. The emergence of 'bridging organisations' seem to lower the costs of collaboration and conflict resolution, and where enabling legislation and governmental policies can support self-organisation while framing creativity for adaptive co-management efforts (ibid, p. 441).

[151] For empirical evidence on the relationship between trust and effectiveness in networks, see Provan et al (2009).

network leadership is established, a network set-up could reduce transaction costs of collaboration, provide social incentives to stakeholders to invest in building trust, identify common interests, and resolve potential conflicts (Rainisto 2003). Leadership, however, should not obstruct the horizontal communication character of the network. It should be rather aimed at setting up and maintaining the network, as opposed to leading the network's operations and strategies (Nebenzahl 2004; Hankinson 2009). Ultimately, leadership as facilitationassists networks to build the capacity to adapt to change (Folke et al 2005). This argument supports a proposed shift of the role of place branding consultants from managers to facilitators that bring together knowledge about place towards a common purpose (Kalandides 2011b). Successful leaders in the network will therefore act as interrogators, in a communications-based place branding model (Burmann & Zeplin 2005 in Hanna & Rowley 2014, p. 105).

As outlined above, there are many issues associated with the challenge of engaging stakeholders for place branding. In particular, as observed through the literature review, a more in-depth look at the role of residents or civil society in place branding processes is needed in order to understand the changes needed to support holistic engagement. The next section provides an overview of interactions between citizens and formal place brand management organisations.

4.2.2 What about civil society? Residents' involvement in place branding

> *[Place branding is] an instrument used by urban elites to legitimise their own strategic decision making in the wider context of the hegemonic project of neoliberal urban governance.*
>
> *(Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015, p. 1,370)*[1]

Citizens, beyond their role as place producers and consumers, legitimise and influence meaning about place brands. Conceptions of place branding as a 'communication-promotional tool' rely on the 'authoritative idea' that place brands can be enforced upon both internal and external publics through visual representations such as logos and slogans and often result in 'communication messages that are largely disconnected from […] residents' [views]' (Kavaratzis 2012, p. 11). Research on the importance of the role of citizens in place branding processes, however, has concentrated primarily on informing and legitimising place branding strategies through consultative processes (Garcia et al 2012). The role of residents in place branding is therefore relegated to brand ambassadors for the place, promoting and often delivering the experiences that form the basis (and promise) of the place brand image (Hankinson 2009).[1] The task of residents as ambassadors is 'to promote a place's image and attractiveness' (Andersson & Enkman 2009, p. 42). Residents therefore form an ambassador network that 'consists of people with a real or perceived connection with the location running the network […] that has been initiated and is being run in a somewhat planned and intentional manner' (Andersson & Enkman 2009, p. 42).[1] Ambassador networks could act both as a communication tool and as a resource for brand development to increase competitiveness, if they included all actors in the process of decision-making, but are rather seen as 'a resource to mobilise local pride and commitment of the citizens' so that citizens understand and support the place brand, and promote the place to potential consumers' (ibid 2009, p. 43).

In practice, place managers traditionally observe place branding as a pull-up factor that encourages local support, patronage or buy-in (Blichfeldt 2005; Hem & Iversen 2004; Kemp et al 2012). In other words, it incites the local community to live up to the place brand (Zouganeli et al 2013). As ambassadors of the place, residents are often regarded as the most valuable asset in place branding (Zenker & Erfgen 2014). Residents are also the most important target market and 'a key reason for failure [in place branding] is the absence of a programme for engaging and energising local people' (Braun et al 2013; Houghton and Stevens 2011, p. 45).[1]

The debate about the role of residents in place branding practices has also identified issues around democratic participation. Often branding messages are quite disconnected from resident's views of place (Gregory 2007; Kavaratzis 2012; Warnaby 2009) resulting in residents' interests being neglected in the place branding process (Braun & Zenker 2012; Stubbs & Warnaby 2015). Increasingly, residents are regarded as partners, since they deliver the 'promise' or 'expectation' that the place brand communicates (Freire 2009; Olsson & Berglund 2009). Nonetheless, in practice, residents are generally consulted to 'pay lip service' to governments' strategies (Bennett & Savani 2003; Colomb & Kalandides 2010). Practical orientation on strategic participatory place branding is still scarce (Zenker & Erfgen 2014). This often results in a myriad of contested images projected simultaneously by governments and residents (Bellini 2004; Colomb & Kalandides 2010).[1] Conflicting messages in turn lead to a disconnection between the projected vision for the place and the reality of it (Trueman et al 2004).[1] In this sense, Lucarelli argues for a close look at the politics of place branding through examples of particular counter-narratives as forms of power expressed through communicative action, as illustrated by the ironic 'Das Kapital' grass-roots social movement embedded campaign, organised and designed to counteract official 'Stockholm Capital of Scandinavia' branding and critique capitalist urban development models (2015, pp. 11-14).

Finally, the literature in urban governance has been particularly concerned with residents' role in participatory branding practices for some time (Braun et al 2013, Eshuis et al 2013; Kalandides 2011; Kavaratzis 2012; Klijn et al 2012; Zenker & Seigis 2012). Although the role of residents in place branding is emphasised, a model to operationalise participation is still lacking in practice (Braun 2012; Colomb & Kalandides, 2010; Freire 2007; Kavaratzis 2012; Zenker 2011). From a practitioner perspective, Gower (2008) argues that in order to solve complex problems, place managers need to come together to create an environment in which actions consider the needs of other stakeholders (aggregating individual behaviours instead of following top-down directives). Since residents play a critical role in the process of defining the opportunities for the future of the place (see also Choo et al 2011; Freire 2007),[1] the following section explores the potential for cooperation towards public value in place branding practices.

4.3 Stakeholder Engagement: Towards Co-opetition and Public Value

The primary purpose of a company is to create as much value as possible for its stakeholders.
(Strand & Freeman 2013, p. 66)

As argued in Chapter Three, the dynamic nature of place brands has challenged the development of benchmarking and measurement frameworks for place branding practices (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Warnaby & Medway 2013). Even the concept of 'competitive identity' reflects the evolution of marketing campaigns based on consumer perceptions of brand image (Anholt 2007).[152] Stakeholder theory is useful to understand the role of stakeholders in value creation, and legitimise their engagement in place branding practices.

Earlier in Chapter Two, in the context of place branding I refer to value linked to the concept of brand equity (Andéhn et al 2014; Lucarelli 2012; Pike et al 2010; Zenker 2011; Zenker & Martin 2011). In this case, brand equity is 'the overall brand strength […] merely a summation of the number, type and positivity of associations people have of the place' (Hildreth 2011, p. 156), and encompasses perceptions about the place brand and it is based on the views of the place brand by consumers. However, it fails to consider local stakeholders (internal audiences) in the place branding process, where for effective place branding, knowledge must be co-produced from the bottom-up (Eshuis et al 2013) which requires co-operation between government and non-government organisations.

This in turn has resulted in a shift from government to governance, from hierarchies and competition, to networks and collaboration (Stoker 1997). In governance, the idea of shared value creation (for companies or places) and the term 'cooperative advantage', as the willingness to cooperate based on joint efforts to commonly create value better reflect the co-creation paradigm of place branding (Strand & Freeman 2013, p. 80).[153] Similarly, cooperative brands are stronger because they build on common strengths (Cai 2002). The concept of 'cooperative advantage' is echoed in Pasquinelli's (2012, 2015) concept of *co-opetition* in the regional branding context (see Chapter Two, p. 14). Pasquinelli (2015) draws from the literature on business network and business-to-business marketing and introduces the concept of co-opetition to refer to a mix

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[152] See Chapter Two, p. 22.
[153] This conceptualisation is more useful when considering participatory approaches to place branding, moving forward from the term 'competitive advantage' supported by Anholt (2007) in his notion of 'competitive identity', implying a dominant strategic management discourse and terminology. See, Anholt (2007).

between competition and cooperation that could guide the place branding process in today's globalised world characterised by regional branding interdependence. The concept of co-opetition is based on sharing resources and achieving critical mass towards a positive-sum game (Pasquinelli 2015). It is relevant for this research since it signals a need to go beyond the rationale of 'competitive advantage' or 'competitive identity' (Anholt 2007) and towards collaboration. The concept of cooperation is also reflected through the idea of 'integrated branding', which includes multiple stakeholders in a place branding network (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2010).

The interrelations between places beyond locations has led to a change in strategic approaches, from competition to cooperation (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009; Kalandides 2007 in Pasquinelli 2015). The key challenge to cooperation is often related to the governance of the interrelations and interactions in the place branding network towards the creation of public value (Moore 2013). Public value often refers to the management of public assets (ibid 2013), however place identity, I argue, is one of those. Furthermore, the notion of public value (from a public management perspective) is rooted in the global, political-economic, technological and social changes affecting governance paradigms, I argue for a brokerage of place management enabling a more engaged civil society in new paradigms of networked community governance (Benington & Moore 2011, p. 13). In this sense, public value returns to the concept of 'public sphere' as a democratic space to debate collective issues, fostering engagement and trust through increasing public interest in policy (Benington & Moore 2011, p. 22).

I argue that the concept of social capital as relationships amongst stakeholders holds value when considered as the glue to networks, complementing the notion of public value. Social capital is defined here as 'features of social organization, such as networks, norms, trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1993, p. 67), or as Newton puts it:

> '[…] a force that helps to bring society together by transforming individuals from self-seeking and egocentric calculators, with little social conscience or sense of mutual obligation, into members of a community with shared interests, shared assumptions about social relations, and a sense of the common good' (Newton 1997, p. 576).

Social capital exists when members of a given organisation communicate and relate to others, (Monge & Contractor 2000) and together with civic engagement is an indicative factor of healthy democratic systems (Putman 2000). Social capital is thus 'an antecedent of behaviour that is oriented toward the public good, either at the community or the political level' (Gil de Zúñiga et al 2012, p. 320).

In public diplomacy, social capital is understood as a system of interconnected actors based on mutual trust and support that is enhanced by collaborative networks, information and resource sharing, as well as cooperation (Taylor & Kent 2014, p. 105). If social networks are based on mutual relationships, and communication creates social capital, social capital when combined with knowledge sharing would assist in dealing with complex issues (Doerfel & Taylor 2004):

> '[W]hile social capital creates the potential for fruitful discussions to take place among otherwise conflicting stakeholders, the trust in actions or 'intellectual capital' provides a common basis for problem definition and agreements' (Giest & Howlett 2013, p.38).

Finally, if the reputations of places are inherent to their performance, changes in reputation will require the place to change (Anholt 2007, 2008a, 2010). In this sense, in public administration, governments are transitioning from public relations towards reputation management, emulating corporations' management of private affairs (Zavattaro 2015, p. 406). Reinforcing the identity and local pride of citizens is also logically central to the process of communication of the identity of place 'through perception and images' (Kavaratzis 2004, p. 66). Consequently, there is a renewed focus on stakeholder-oriented practices, or 'participatory place branding' in the literature (Kavaratzis 2012; Zenker & Beckmann 2013a). The concept of 'participatory place branding' supports the argument that place brands should be created following an interactive process (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015),[154] and the growing body of research on the concept is shaping to be a key development of place branding. In order to situate the context in which participation occurs, in the next section I review the current traditional top-down structure of place branding against bottom-up or informal place branding towards the development of an alternative framework allowing more holistic arrangements[155].

4.4 From narrow top-down to inclusive bottom-up approaches to place branding

A truly participatory approach will go a step further and allow residents to not only influence the content and goals of branding, but the method and tools of communication

(Zenker & Erfgen 2014, p. 228).

The traditional government approach to branding places has consisted of hierarchical, government-led structures of decision-making, typically informed by consultation processes, serving particular interests for economic development, such as boosting tourism and investment (Kotler et al 1993). Consultation has been traditionally observed as a process where information was shared one-way by governments without (or minimal) participation of feedback from citizens (Arnstein 1969). It is argued that often stakeholder participation in place branding practices, particularly of residents, is limited to consultative surveys (Olsson & Berglund 2009).

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[154] Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) reviewed the link between place identity and place brand to argue that place brands are formed from the interactions of place brand associations. The implication here is that the way in which place-making elements are associated in the minds of consumers (interactions) define place brands.

[155] Throughout this thesis, I understand holistic arrangements or holistic place branding practice or processes as more inclusive arrangements that encompass or represent all stakeholders in the place branding process. In this sense, the term 'holistic' is used as a synonym of 'inclusive', in the philosophical sense that the parts (stakeholders) of something (the identity of a place) are inherently interconnected and are understood as a whole.

Such approach, as argued above, has proven instrumental due to its narrow strategic vision for the place and short-term commitment (Anholt 2010). Although consultation has recently been linked to the public diplomacy concept of 'citizen engagement' (Hocking 2005, 2008), governments still struggle to define where they stand in collaborative or participatory governance practices. The risk-averse nature of government institutions (Melissen 2011) results in gatekeeping and distrust in citizens to do 'the right thing' (Ind & Bjerke 2007).

In practice, when citizens are disengaged, often informal, unofficial or contested brand messages arise with the associated effect of creating confusion regarding a place's image (Vuignier 2015). Bottom-up branding processes can therefore lead to forms of 'guerrilla warfare' in place branding (Eco 1983).[156] Conscious of the interactions between formal and informal branding, scholars have identified a more holistic approach to greater stakeholder engagement as a key success factor in branding places (Braun et al 2013).

Holistic stakeholder engagement has been linked to organic processes or 'bottom-up' approaches to branding places (Gnoth 2002). Bottom-up approaches are also linked to the concept of sustainability in destination branding (Zouganeli et al 2012) and have led to the recognition by place branding scholars that the management of the identities and images of places requires stakeholder engagement and involvement to ensure the long-term sustainability of place brands (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Gilmore 2002). Engagement can only be achieved through processes of identity co-creation that support wide participation of a full range of stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz 2012; Warnaby & Medway 2013).[157] This approach suggests that the place branding process can emerge organically from stakeholder collaboration, as opposed to being enacted by practitioners (Braun et al 2013). Empirical research in participatory place branding then requires observing stakeholder interactions and the social construction of place identities underpinning place branding policy (Anholt 2004, 2007; Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015; Passi 2003). The next section therefore situates developing theories in the literature towards more holistic practices through participatory and bottom-up approaches to engagement.

[156] Umberto Eco engages in a reflection of the effects of the new informational and technological paradigm and the shift of communication from a new form of societal control in the hands of economic powers for the most part, and argues the need for a revolution in which 'communication would then be patrolled by groups of communications guerrillas, who would restore a critical dimension to passive reception' (1983, p. 15).

[157] In fact, a consistent projected positive place image is often a consequence of already existing identities based on healthy social fabrics, as opposed to the application of a traditional 'top-down' approach of strategic planning process led by marketing practitioners.

4.4.1 Towards holistic approaches to branding places

Places must engage with the outside world in a clear, coordinated and communicative way

(Anholt 2010, p. 2)

Despite a recognition of the importance of stakeholder engagement and the development of a clear vision embedded in the place brand, and coordinated communication in place branding, the patterns underlying information exchanges and associated issues around participation remain under-researched (Anholt 2010; Sevin 2011; Zavattaro 2015). This is perhaps due to place branding practices being ascribed to a neoliberal discourse of economic development, which follows short-term agendas, and its constriction by hierarchical top-down approaches to place management (Varga 2013). As argued above, the management of the reputations of places, however, requires a more holistic approach which encapsulates both formal and informal attempts and strategies to brand the place (Govers & Go 2009) to mitigate the effects of counter-narratives and conflicting messages (Hanna & Rowley 2008). Holistic approaches that integrate formal and informal branding have the potential not only to mitigate the effects of counter narratives, but can also integrate the powerful forces and messages ingrained in informal processes within the formal branding process, creating synergies between formal and informal branding resulting in increased effectiveness of practice.

Scholars have now identified the need for a managerial approach 'in which the processes of the organisation revolve around the creation, development and protection of brand identity' (Urde 1999 in Hankinson 2015, p. 19). This has echoed in scholarly calls for research on brand orientation (Hankinson 2012), an approach that suggests that a cultural change and commitment towards a consistent communication of place brand values will require greater collaboration between place branding organisations and stakeholders (Anholt 2002; Hankinson 2009, 2012, 2015).

In this research, I integrate the critical literature on place branding with the literature on place identity displacing in the process an instrumental practice with a communicative practice that recognises that the co-creation process is best realised via forms of network governance, stressing the political and governance issues underlying place brand decision-making (Pike 2009). Since managing different political interests to control the brand while maintaining political stability are key elements of success for place branding processes (Anholt 2005; Bennet & Savani 2003; Fan 2006; Pedersen 2004; Ward 2000),[1] public administration researchers have also focused on the role of different stakeholders in the process of place branding from a governance perspective (Braun et al 213; Eshuis et al 2013; Eshuis et al 2014; Klijn et al 2012). Building on their work, I argue that collaboration in the co-creation process needs to be understood as an ongoing process in which political interests need to be observed along with residents' views. Such dialogical processes should envisage the development of stakeholder engagement platforms or networks with the aim of supporting common purpose, resilience and adaptability. Building further on these ideas, the next section reviews changes in the governance literature towards network approaches and their links to the social construction of place identities.

4.5 Network governance: operationalising participation

> *It is because no unified power elite is capable of keeping the programming and switching operations of all-important networks under its control that more subtle, complex, and negotiated systems of enforcement must be established.*
>
> *(Castells 2011, p. 777)*

The sections above reinforce the argument that the power relationships embedded in top-down hierarchical place branding models have a negative effect on the dynamism and innovative nature of network societies (Castells 2011). In this thesis I argue that by observing the communicative relationships of stakeholders in a social network alongside a focus on stakeholder engagement, a more effective and realistic model to guide the *process* of construction of *collective identities* in place branding could be developed (Brewer & Gardner 1996; Castells 2011; Melucci 1996; Paasi 2003).[158] In order to better engage civil society, the method needs to change from exclusively stakeholder communication to participation in decision-making processes.

Social sciences research has widely explored and critiqued the concept of social networks as a more horizontal model for citizen engagement, besides a more promising alternative to advance common goals (Gaventa & Barret 2010; Gil de Zúñiga et al 2012; Reddel & Woolcock 2004). Networks are the new ways of societal organisation and they respond to '[the] need to move away from conceptual frameworks organised around the notions of centre and hierarchies' to more collaborative models, since networks have a role in 'disseminating information and ideas, providing access to resources, capabilities and markets, and allowing the combination of different pieces of knowledge' (Castells 2000, p. 693; Cassi et al 2008, p. 664). Here I build on Castells' framework of social network to argue the importance of stakeholder dyadic relationships in place branding (Aitken & Campelo 2011). Castells (2000) concludes that our social fabric and processes are changing because of new form of social interaction along electronic information networks. 'By social structure I mean the organisational arrangements of humans in relationships of production/consumption, experience, and power, as expressed in meaningful interaction framed by culture' (Castells 2000, p. 695). In the network structure, 'actors share messages from multiple senders-receivers, using a versatile, diversified and open-ended communication system

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[158] The term 'social identity' (Hogg 2016) has also been used in social psychological analysis to refer to group identity formation, process and intergroup relationships. I use here collective identity since it is a more flexible concept, because it refers to the process of collaboratively and collectively creating an identity, as opposed to social identities as differentiating characteristics of a groups.

integrating messages and codes from all sources, exercising socialised communication in multimodal and multichannel networks' (Castells 2011, p. 780). Castells describes the network as a set of interconnected nodes, 'flexible, adaptive structures that, powered by information technology, can perform any task that has been programmed in the network' (Castells, 2000, p. 695). And it is this *adaptative* nature of the network that is most relevant to the dynamic and ever-changing nature of places. In this sense, *adaptative* governance (Folke et al 2005) provides the necessary diversity and flexibility to create a resilient place branding network (Janssen 2007; Luthe et al 2012).[159]

An adaptative place branding network, I argue, has to be based on shared identities and cultures, since all networks share a common trait: cultural *materials,* such as ideas, visions, projects and frames that generate the programs (Castells 2011). Similarly, in his study of the construction of identities, Castells (2013) points to the need for alternative projects for social organisation to respond to the challenges that the political impact of the social media network has in influencing governance processes (Florek 2015; Sevin 2011; Zhang et al 2009).[160] This is relevant to the challenges that place branding practice is currently facing, since the process raises democratic issues.[161] Place branding campaigns based on one-way government propaganda are often unsuccessful in their attempts to silence contested messages, since their effect is to empower the *résistance* through mass communication networks (Castells 2013). Similarly, branding places for economic development results in the commodification of cultures, often serving the interests of corporate strategies, and forces the communicative process as consumption rather than co-production (Castells 2013, p. 422). Mass self-communication challenges the governments'

[159] The new communication networks have the capability to expand indefinitely, incorporate new nodes and reconfigure themselves, since they are open and have minimal physical limitations, they can 'increase their value exponentially as they add nodes and therefore can create limitless connections and interactions amongst other stakeholders (Castells, 2000, p. 698). Castells (*ibid*) argues that networks are dynamic, self-evolving structures, which, powered by information technology and communicating with the same digital language, can grow and include all social expressions compatible with each network's goals. Thus, a networked social structure is an open system that can expand indefinitely as long as the networks included in the meta-network are compatible. This observation by Castells will be particularly relevant to the analysis of stakeholder roles in place branding, based on what they understand branding is, in other words, whether they speak the same 'language' or not. Thus, changes in the information and communications technologies have brought about flexible and horizontal global digital networks of production and consumption, transforming business models that were generally vertical, top-down, and relying on mass-production and mass-distribution networks. If place branding processes take place in the network society, it is relevant to observe network governance as an alternative more flexible arrangement. In place branding processes, a common vision is at the core of the common project of advancing a place's reputation.

[160] New models of governance are required since the transition from the nation-state to the network state has brought about a crisis of legitimacy of traditional institutions (Castells 1997, p. 354; see also Harvey 1989). For example, social networking sites influencing political attitudes and political participation (Bennet 2012).

[161] This is linked to Castells' reflections on communication power in the network society (2013).

capacity to control brand messages and 'change power relationships in the communication sphere' as a form of counter-power (ibid).[162]

4.5.1 Network governance, participation and engagement

> *Networked governance is a particular framing of collective decision making that is characterised by a trend for a wider range of participants to be seen as legitimate members of the decision-making process in the context of considerable uncertainty and complexity. The pressure is on to find new ways to collaborate as the interdependence of a range of individuals and organizations intensifies.*
>
> *(Stoker 2006, p.41)*

Place branding has a strong governance character and stakeholder involvement enhances the chance of success of the governance process (Klijn et al 2012). Braun (2011) argues, similarly that urban governance guides city marketing and city branding, linking them to the field of public administration, where governance and policy processes stem from networks of actors. Similarly, in her exploration of place brand identity in three US states, Zavattaro argues that place branding and marketing are key governance strategies that need to include stakeholders in the process of creating place identities (2015, p. 405). Thus, place branding, as a contemporary governance strategy (Eshuis et al 2013; Eshuis & Edwards 2012) requires a strategic focus on participation and dialogue (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013; Klijn, Eshuis & Braun 2012).

Habermas called for state and civil society to find common ground towards common decision making in new participatory arrangements (1984). This recognition found ground in place management as a structural arrangement to improve place through private, public and community partnerships under the 'New Governance' policy framework (Reddel 2002, p.58; Davis & Rhodes 2000). [163] The developments of 'New Governance' are echoed in 'New Public Management' perspectives (Rhodes 1996).[164] Nowadays the state acts as facilitator or animator following 'Third Way politics' attempts to maintain democracy against globalisation through

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[162] An example of production and dissemination of alternative news through networks and social media can be found in the Arab Spring uprisings. See Lotan et al (2011).

[163] Reddel provided an account of place-based public policy in Australia to highlight the developments in regional planning and development, from top-down policies to more participatory and community-involved practices focusing on both economic and social policies 'within a spatial or place framework' (2002, p. 52). As Reddel explains, following several waves of interest in regionalism and following the establishment of the 'Regional Australia Strategy' in 1996, the Commonwealth Federal Government of Australia stopped interfering in social capital and community association activities to allow community capacity building (ibid, pp. 52-53). Influenced by international and particularly European trends, the Australian government started to collaborate and partner with non-government actors more widely, redefining roles and responsibilities despite a lack of clear policy methods in place (Reddel 2002).

[164] Reddel (2002) argued that the failure of state and market approaches to public policy had led to the rise of community or networked governance, in which the role of civil society was being revisited. Reddel then proposed a new form of governance based on dialogue and engagement in the public sphere, an interactive framework highlighting community, localism and citizen participation values (ibid, p. 50). The 'new governance' approach favours networks against traditional hierarchical forms of organisation of society as a policy framework (Davis & Rhodes 2000). The aim of networks is to increase participation of non-governmental actors in public policy-making to improve both the policy process and implementation (Jessop 1998; Kooiman 1993; Mayntz 1993).

increased citizen dialogue and participation, which results in a new the role of the governments as enablers of 'collective action' (Dryzek 2000, p. 82). These changes have resulted in the rise of government by the network as a new approach to collaboration between governments, private firms and not-for-profits to accomplish public goals and deliver services (Eggers & Goldsmith 2003).[165] Furthermore, the parallel evolution of New Public Administration and New Public Management have fuelled a renewed debate on 'policy networks' and 'governance networks' as alternative structural arrangements to hierarchies and markets, as has the rise of the 'New Public Governance',which emphasises the potential for public collaboration for problem-solving in complex issues (Klijn & Koppenjan 2012).[166] Policy networks focus on the nature of network relationships, the actors involved and how it effects decision making and influences public policy making (Klijn & Koppenjan 2012, p. 4).

The shift to include and coordinate stakeholders in governance processes is also widely supported in the literature of city and nation branding, place management and place marketing (Van der Berg & Braun 1999; Kooiman 2002; Hankinson 2004; Karavatzis & Ashworth 2005).[167] Out of the restraints of traditional government planning procedures, decisions, policies and actions arise from new strategic networks of public and private stakeholders allowing for more flexible arrangements since 'city branding is by definition branding in a network setting' (Braun 2011, p. 262).[168]

The marketing of places is different to the marketing of products (Ashworth 1993, p. 648), not only because of the complexity of places (Van den Berg & Braun 1999) but also because of the

[165] Eggers and Goldsmith (2003) maintain that the Internet has reduced the cost of information and that has enabled governments to contract out services and avoid high information processing costs and bureaucracy, and thus public value and valuable resources need to be channelled differently in a new model of public sector governance by allowing network managers to coordinate actions in real time. Large business organisations respond to savings in costs of creating, selling and distributing goods and services. High level of public-private collaboration is characteristic of third-party government, where technology connects the network and provides wider choices in service delivery to citizens by using robust network management capabilities of joined-up government. Specialisation, innovation, speed, flexibility and increased reach are the listed advantages behind the government's movement towards networks. The authors (2003) add that appropriate network delivery systems will produce innovation opportunities and that democratic governance is the key factor for them to occur (that is, including citizens in the governance process of decision-making).

[166] Klijn and Koppenjan (2012) argue that research has focused on three main network types, namely: policy networks; inter-organizational service delivery and policy implementation; and research on the management of networks (Public Administration). They argue that the term policy network has been replace by the emerging term of 'governance network' to better reflect the changes in governance network theory based on the interdependency of actors, the complexity of their interactions, the institutional features (networks structure) and the guidance of such interactions (or network management) (2012, pp. 4-5).

[167] Also by transnational institutions in practice. From a destination management perspective, the World Tourism Organisation (2004) indicated that a necessary element of sustainable tourism development is 'the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building'.

[168] The impact of the definition of place branding that each stakeholder holds determines how stakeholders in different industries or sectors collaborate with each other and share knowledge. Unclear definitions or wrong understandings of the place branding mission and process can result in issues of collaboration. Thus, it is important for stakeholders to understand what the purpose of branding is for effective collaboration.

structures and governance arrangements in which branding occurs (Warnaby et al 2002). Network governance has an application here in the context of 'resilience', since places are in continuous adaptation. Similarly, Stoker (2006) defines public value management as a new narrative for network governance. In this sense, the aim is to achieve public value and to move from the application of private sector management techniques to focus on politics as a *process* (Stoker 1996, p. 46). This can be achieved by reinforcing the legitimacy of stakeholder involvement (Stoker 2006), and a flexible knowledge-approach to public management (Jessop 2000; Rhodes 1997). If place branding requires greater stakeholder engagement, alternative participatory governance models could help address the complex and interdependent relationships with 'new actors external to the political arena' (Argiolas et al 2009, p. 182).[169] Hence, governance is here understood as a new form of horizontal self-organisation among mutually interdependent actors (Jessop 2000, in Argiolas et al 2009) aimed at the development of social capital, civil society and high levels of citizen participation (Kooiman 1993).[170]

Similarly, Rhodes defines governance as '[f]ormulation and implementation of collectively binding decisions through the participation of state and non-state actors in public/private networks' (Rhodes 1996, p. 660). Governance is thus the structure and process of strategy and management, while government refers to the agents and institutions governing territories (Jessop 1998; Rhodes 1997). I argue that for the development of a framework for a new form of governance for place branding in which negotiation occurs in networks, a structure evolving from tightly-controlled and hierarchical traditional models to a non-linear once, in which diplomacy replaces competition as a key tool for policy development (Davis & Rhodes 2000).

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[169] Peters et al (2005) reflect on the path dependency of institutions, arguing that change in policy needs to be reflective of the particular social, economic and political context. Peters et al also outline the disagreement in scholarship about the role of institutions and the challenge political scientists face of 'develop an understanding of the complex relationships existing among institutions, ideas, and agency in explaining the trajectory of policy development' (ibid, p. 1,297). This discussion is relevant to place branding since the latter has been conducted in a rather institutionalised context.

[170] Therefore, the central State adapts into a network of alliances involving private organisations, business, non-profit entities, and private citizens (OECD 2006 in Argiolas et al 2009 p. 182). Saunders, however, analysed the purpose and the way in which networks are initiated (traditionally by governments or public bodies) to conclude that 'a state-centered academic paradigm for the study and practice of politics–the so-called realist paradigm or power politics model-was not large enough to allow room for citizens' (ibid, p. 135). Saunders (2014) proposes a body politic as a political process of continuous interaction with permeable boundaries instead of institutions that could be adapted for participatory place branding. In practice, this results in bringing participants together over time in a five-stage dialogue process: dialogue about dialogue (citizens share thoughts on an emerging problem and ask themselves what to do); mapping and naming problems and relationships; probing problems and relationships to choose a direction; scenario-building (specific actions and interactive steps, list of resources, main obstacles, ways to overcome them and responsibilities); and implementation (larger community might be engaged and provisions for mid-term corrections and constant reviews), (ibid, pp. 140-142).

Collaboration or conflict between stakeholders both affect place marketing and development from a political economy perspective (Bramwell 2011; Short & Kim 1999).[171] Van den Berg and Braun (1999) also emphasise the potential for conflict of interests in the 'strategic network' affecting place marketing activities. In this sense, when developing participation, social processes need to be observed in their duality, and therefore conflict needs to be assessed alongside solidarity (Cleaver 2004, p. 216). Hanna and Rowley (2015) identified the need for greater and more open stakeholder communication (in line with Aaker & Joachimshaler 2000), not only to achieve common goals effectively, but also to highlight and repair conflicts of interest.[172] In addition, reflecting on the adaptability concept in governance, sustainability and development are observed as key areas in the planning processes for places (Hankinson 2004; Pedersen 2004).[173]

Despite concerns about potential conflicts, relationships in the network are defined generally by consensus building, a powerful tool for reaching agreements in complex and controversial multi-issue, or multi-player contexts, where holding network members accountable for their actions or inactions might prove challenging, especially when there are no sanctions in place (Giest & Howlett 2013).[174] 'Networks emerge due to positive or negative incentives and agreed-upon collaborations', emphasising the need for common ground for stakeholders to collaborate (ibid, p.39).[175] Consensus building is possible but it 'is only appropriate in situations of uncertainty and controversy where all stakeholders have incentives to come to the table and mutual reciprocity in their interests' (Innes 2004, p. 5). Furthermore, the tension between reaching consensus and effecting change needs to be observed, since power-relations within place branding actors are also reflected in place branding practice and 'it is important for a variety of community based

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[171] Bramwell (2011) employs social theory to understand the impact of governments activities in development and argues that *governance* not only refers to systems of governing, but is also linked to collective action and coordination. Bramwell (ibid) observes governance in sustainable tourism through a political economy approach, to argue that governance is key to support sustainable development, since it requires collective action.

[172] Hanna and Rowley (2015) suggest that DMOs could adopt a leadership role in place branding, through their proposed 'Place Brand Web', since they observe how a place's portfolio of brands could be used by tourism and other industries to co-create the tourism and wider place experience. Hannah and Rowley's (2015) study, however, is based only on practitioners' views of stakeholder management in various UK cities and primarily in the tourism domain, and therefore fails at including the views of traditionally non-engaged stakeholders, such as civil society. In addition, the results of their investigation into stakeholder engagement and proposed Brand Web Model showed that brand architecture is heavily depended on stakeholder engagement. Integrating the ideas of stakeholders will require place brand managers to adopt a facilitator role, since brand values must not be imposed, rather stakeholders need to identify with the core-values that form the place brand (ibid). A focus on multiple place brand owners does not necessarily include all stakeholders, particularly those that brand the place informally. In this sense, Hanna and Rowley (2015) suggest a co-branding model as opposed to a process of brand co-creation (Aitken & Campelo 2011).

[173] For a review of collaboration in tourism planning, see Jamal and Stronza (2009).

[174] Relationships between stakeholders have also been defined as 'patterns of linkages through which the parties in relationships pursue and service their independent needs' (Broom et al 1997); 'a set of expectations two parties have for each other's behaviour based on their interaction patterns' (Thomlison 2000).

[175] Giest and Howlett (2013) observe networks in the management of the commons. Although the context is quite different to the process of place branding, governing the commons is a complex issue that requires stakeholder involvement, and thus some parallels can be drawn here.

organisations and stakeholders to collaborate and reach consensus' (Baker 2007, p. 10). Generally, network relationships support participation and positive outcomes through access, assurances, networking, openness, positivity, trust and commitment (Zaharna 2014, p. 160).[176] In this set up, information and knowledge exchanges, as well as inter-organisational dialogue assist innovation and transformation (Marsh 1998) in social interactions, that are defined as 'set of points some of which are joined by lines to form a total network of relations' (Barnes 1954, p. 43).

This section has outlined the main characteristics of network governance that, I argue, could support participatory place branding processes. As presented above, participatory or collaborative policymaking in place branding requires democratic and inclusive exchanges of knowledge, information and resources, and consists in two-way interactive exchanges between government and non-government actors. Thus, for stakeholders to share responsibility for policy outcomes and co-participate in strategic planning and decision-making (Edwards 2008), there is a need for a model that enables democratic participation and increased trust in other's knowledge, resources and capabilities (Zaharna 2014).[177] Prior to outlining and describing the characteristics of network governance, and in particular policy networks as superior governance arrangements for place branding practices, I provide a brief summary of the attempts to theorise and apply participatory place branding processes in the literature of place branding.

4.6 Participatory place branding: interactive governance for places

[T]he strongest form of stakeholder participation is when stakeholders co-decide and co-produce the brand.

(Eshuis & Klijn 2012, p. 16)

Beyond tools for economic development, Kavaratzis and Kalandides hold an 'interactional view of place branding' in which stakeholders are engaged in an interdependent relationship through which they construct and give meaning to the place brand, and suggest a need to rethink traditional understandings of place brands as networks of associations due to the dynamic and ever-changing nature of places, since those associations evolve 'through the interactions with

[176] There is, however, debate on the best or most suitable structure for the network. Zaharna (2014) introduces the importance of centralisation, network bridges and the role of network weavers in a public diplomacy initiative, in an assessment of the ties that would suit the network. Zaharna's reflection responds to her observations on density, quantity and quality of the network. Zaharna (ibid, p. 179) observes that members in denser networks communicate more often and easier, sharing behaviours and expectations and reinforcing the networks' norms whereas sparser networks seem to be more efficient and less redundant. Large networks create better awareness but strong ties between its members, as well as supporting trust, commitment and longevity. Zaharna then advocates for smaller networks with strong times for public diplomacy initiatives, since they require coordination of efforts and constant communication (2014, p.178).

[177] Kavaratzis (2016) also emphasises place branding as a strategic activity that is inherently linked to destination and other types of branding. Pasquinelli (2014), in turn, considers city branding as a collective strategic process in which stakeholder participation is key.

each other on several dimensions' (2015, p. 1,368-78).[178] Stakeholders are both given and take control of brand meanings (Hatch & Schultz 2010), and brand value is 'co-created through network relationships and social interactions among the ecosystem of all stakeholders' (Merz & Vargo 2009), and place brands are therefore a blend of single identities through unique interactions (Ren & Blichfelt 2011). The recognition of the key role of stakeholder interaction has shifted attention towards participatory approaches to branding places (Kavaratzis 2016; Pasquinelli 2014), which focuses on increasing the dialogue between stakeholders, highlights the role of internal audiences, and signals the need to empower them for effective place branding (Ind & Bjerke 2007; Gregory 2007; Hatch & Schultz 2008).[179]

This in turn mirrors recent developments in the field of governance, where participation is defined by the citizen's exercise of agency in action concerning development (Hickey & Mohan 2004). Similarly, I argue that for place branding 'understanding the ways in which participation relates to existing power structures and political systems provides the basis for moving towards a more transformatory approach to development' (Hickey & Mohan 2004, p.5). Adopting a participatory citizenship approach, a structural change emphasising social justice through participatory governance leads to increased rights and control of citizens over socioeconomic resources and a transition from tokenism to transformation (Gaventa 2004; Hickey & Mohan 2004).[180] Equally, despite existing issues relative to participatory place branding processes such as agency, political motivations, particular interests, and conflict between individual and collective identities, a participatory citizenship approach aimed at empowering communities to enact change and collectively decide on development strategies could better face the many challenges associated with branding places as complex entities. The challenge is enormous and requires cultural change since participatory governance will not succeed by simply developing inclusive institutional arrangements, as they are subject to power, and require the construction of new relationships between ordinary people and the institutions, especially those of government (Gaventa 2004, p. 25).[181]

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[178] Branding is about creating 'positive associations', but such associations form differently at an individual and collective level, and at the interaction between both (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005b).

[179] Ind and Bjerke (2007, p. 100) further explain that '[. . .] the element that separates the participatory approach is the idea of personal and direct engagement by managers and employees who understand and are able to explore the framework of the brand' alluding to the difficulties associated to different understandings of place branding.

[180] The concept of citizenship, however, is debated in the literature. See Jones and Gaventa (2004).

[181] The multiplicity of identities in place matter since 'decision-making processes and the exercise of agency within them, therefore, may be contradictory in their social effects; respectful attitudes, conflict avoidance and consensus decision-making can all serve to reinforce inequality despite securing functional outcomes' (Cleaver 2004, p. 272).

In branding as a governance strategy, for instance, brands are affected by external events and influences that lead to consumers' and citizens' reinterpretations (Eshuis & Klijn 2012, p.101).[182] Furthermore, the shift towards more collaborative and participatory governance approaches, as well as the increase in partnerships between government and community sectors, are due to '[…] ideas of participatory governance emerging in the 1960s and 1970s as a reaction against "big government" and the influences of big businesses and corporations, denoting an apparent distrust in government and the decision-making process' (Webber 2012, p.5). However, political power struggles over management hinder the development of the unity that the place branding process requires in order to be effective (Kalandides et al 2012, 2013; Pasquinelli 2014; Van Ham 2008). As such, place branding scholars argue that branding needs to be defined as a participatory practice, otherwise it is perceived as a waste of taxpayer's money and pure consultant's business (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015). Participation therefore lies at the heart of brand governance (Ind & Bjerke 2007), and 'at the core of an effective and successful brand building process' (Lucarelli & Giovanardi 2016, p. 17).

Within this framework, stakeholder inclusion can take different forms, for example: public hearings, advisory committees, surveys, focus groups, public deliberations, citizen review panels, collaboration, civic review boards, work groups, implementation studies and written comments, as well as indirect inclusion through the media, in the form of letters to editors, blog entries, social media posts, and so forth (see Byrd & Gustke 2011, p.150; Schultz 2000; Woodly 2008). By relocating power to residents, place branding can become a supporter of residential projects and overcome the negative image it has developed as a place-selling, tourism-oriented, 'neoliberal' strategy. In this way, place marketing and branding can ideally realise its greatest potential: namely, to support places and their residents 'to maximise the efficient social and economic functioning of the area concerned, in accordance with whatever wider goals have been established' (Ashworth & Voogd 1990, p. 11). Nevertheless, the potential of such a participatory approach warrants a certain amount of risk and, since question of how different stakeholders interact and relate to each other is unclear, stakeholders often understand and attach to the boundaries of place differently.

As a result of the shift towards collaboration, participatory place branding is increasingly being used in cities and regions (Eshuis & Edwards 2012; Eshuis & Kljin 2011) as a governance model for managing places' images and reputations (Ind & Bjerke 2007; Lucarelli & Giovanardi 2016), and where participation in this context is often limited to consultation (Braun et al 2013). In order

[182] Much of the literature about brands in governance has been primarily concerned with the management of public brands or reputations, or with network management (Eshuis & Klijn 2012). For an overview of network management strategies, see Koppenjan and Klijn (2004).

to analyse the different degrees of participation I refer to Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation including: non-participation (planners explain their decisions to the stakeholders); termed degrees of tokenism (stakeholders are allowed to express their interests, ideas, and concerns, but have no power to influence decisions); and citizen power (stakeholder involvement that includes the ability to influence directly the decision-making process and the decisions).

Therefore, in instances where traditional public governance is giving way to a more communicative process of brand governance, scholars call for research on power politics and the relationship between branding organisations and institutions (Hankinson 2010b; Eshuis & Klijn 2012 in Lucarelli & Giovanardi 2016). Participation in the co-creation of brands (or brand governance) is part of an engagement process of continuous dialogue between stakeholders that is often problematic since not all stakeholders have access to such dialogue at all times (Hatch & Shultz 2009, 2010). It is in this sense that brand governance has been criticised as an imposition of managerial practice or colonisation of societies (Kaneva 2011; Pasquinelli 2012; Sevin & Hayden 2012). This is in part due to its political implications, such as stakeholder exclusion (Ward 2000a,b). In the regional context, for instance, there is a greater tension between 'the political, administrative and social function' of governance, and a governance model based on commodification of place that is heavily influenced by marketing principles (Lucarelli & Giovanardi 2016, p. 18).[183]

Scholars emphasise that participatory place branding processes, where governments act as facilitators, can become an arduous undertaking due to the political nature of the branding process and the lack of expertise of governments as both marketers and facilitators (Bjerke 2007).[184] In this sense, Houghton and Stevens, from a city branding perspective, advocate for holistic frameworks for engagement and define participation as: '[a process] designed to generate and support a greater sense of ownership, which is a crucial ingredient in any branding initiative' (2011, p. 45). Despite the obvious need to include stakeholders at all levels in the place branding process, Houghton and Stevens (2011) acknowledge that there are many challenges related to the

[183] Similarly, from a regional development stance, Eversole reflects on the role of government in community development to argue that 'participation in governance is about devolving the power to effect change and the responsibility to solve problems from central governing bodies to more regional or local bodies or communities' (2009, p. 96).

[184] In the place-branding domain, Andersson and Ekman introduce the role of coordinator (usually local government administration or public or semi-public agencies), in charge of the organisation and overall responsibility for initiating and running an ambassador network (2009, p. 46). Private organisations would be then responsible for setting up and maintaining the networks. The communicator may appoint a moderator in charge of moderating the communication and interaction in the networks. Investment and leadership are then identified as key success factors for ambassador networks. Furthermore, in their analysis, Andersson and Ekman (2009) compare the importance of forming new relationships with relationship marketing and public diplomacy research in the interaction and dialog as value-creating factors (Hankinson 2003; Wang 2006), but also refer to co-branding situations where the network benefits from the brand equity of a network's member positive reputation acts as another form of value added.[184]

use of a more participatory or horizontal approach, ownership and authority being two of the most salient. In addition, governments tend to focus their 'executive attention on political issues, public affairs and putting out fires', thus having little time to develop and foster community partnerships (Eggers & Goldsmith 2003, p. 5). Changes towards participatory place branding result, in essence, in changes in place brand ownership, since 'the co-creation of brand meanings by consumers shifts brand ownership from the managerial and legalist sphere of intellectual property rights and trademarks to consumers and brand users' (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 916). As argued above, stakeholder relationships can suffer from political subjectivity due to the contested and sometimes antagonistic nature of government-other stakeholder relationships (Zenker 2011).

As a result of political and administrative constraints, the difficulty associated with developing a structure for engagement in place branding is self-evident. In place branding processes, stakeholder involvement begins with the identification of key groups in the community, where 'stakeholders with more power, [and] the ability to impact the organisation, are allowed more involvement' (Byrd & Gustke 2011, p. 150). Participatory forms of urban governance, for instance, not only reflect the on-going nature of the place branding process, but legitimise it by reflecting better on the elements that contribute to place-making (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015, pp. 1,378-79).[185]

However, if places are conceived as unique, dynamic and open-ended entities, place branding needs to focus on stakeholder interactions at all levels of place-making.[186] This shift, however, presents a series of challenges in practice. For instance, issues of agency arise both in place making and place branding (since they are interlinked), as well as around function and scale, as well as those linked to the diversity of administrative and organisational dimensions of place (Kavaratzis & Kalandides 2015). Since service delivery and decision-making happens in networks of interdependent actors, complex decision making and interaction processes require collaborative leadership (Ansell & Gash 2008; Koppenjan & Klijn 2004; Mandell 2001).

The complexity of the issue has resulted in few attempts to facilitate true participatory approaches in place branding beyond mere consultative processes. For instance, from a place management perspective, Gower suggested a framework for people-managed places, arguing that leadership in place management needs to come from the public, and that 'the sustained development of

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[185] Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) recognise the challenges of branding as a political process and the challenges of managing stakeholder interactions. Is in their conclusions that I build here to suggest alternative governance arrangements to deal with such challenges.

[186] It is in this sense that Kalandides (2011b) calls for a shift on the way we conceive roles in place branding practices to suggest that place branding consultants should only be facilitators of the process, providing their expertise to stakeholders, that collectively make place.

place will depend on the capacity for self-management: in other words, there is a need for infrastructure that facilitates civil governance instead of top-down directives' (2008, p.320).[187]

As I argue further below, participant-governed policy networks[188] do have the potential to address the constraints outlined above. By sharing leadership in a participatory policy network setup, greater integration among members of the network is possible (Börzel 2011), potentially leading to stronger sense of agency and trust (Huxham & Vangen 2005; Provan & Kenis 2008). Furthermore, in a participant-led network arrangement (Provan & Kenis 2008), stakeholders with different interests will better engage and take collective ownership of actions and initiatives, transcending public-private divides in the process (Dredge 2006; Klijn & Koppenjan 2000; Scott et al 2008). Furthermore, full commitment of the members to information sharing and collaboration will foster external and internal legitimacy within the wider community of the place:

> […] if decision making is widespread–much against the common view of needing to concentrate everything in one hand. It may be less efficient, since it would obviously transport a blurred – or if you wish fragmented – picture but it would get much closer to the reality of the city (Kalandides 2006, p. 9).

The specific issue of fragmentation, although is not part of the main aim of this research, can explain the challenges participatory models face. It is important to note, however, that in order to institutionalise participatory forms of governance a certain degree of pedagogy is required to create the much needed flexible space for cooperation and collaboration (Popescu 2013).[189] The following section takes this idea further to develop policy networks as more inclusive governance arrangement to facilitate participatory place branding processes.

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[187] Gower's review of practice critiques a 'laissez-faire' approach that leads to local government and developers being in charge of place management (2008, p. 316). This is applicable to the place branding process, and the necessity of operationalising the paradigm of co-creation. Gowers also reflects on issues of institutional integrity, that can be attained through 'accountable, transparent, competent and participatory local governance, founded on appropriate data bases, due entitlements, civic responsibilities and duties [… so] places should facilitate the free-flowing interaction of place users' (2008, p. 318).

[188] Here I acknowledge the present debate between usage of the term 'policy network' or 'governance network' to refer to the structures that support network approaches to governance.

[189] Popescu (2013) illustrates through the case of Romania that holistic approaches that lead to co-participation of citizens in public policy processes require the creation of a set of conditions that support such approach.

4.7 Policy networks as more inclusive governance arrangements

An effective cross-organization knowledge management system can provide a host of benefits: it can help develop new knowledge, flesh out solutions to daily problems, enhance learning across the network, build trust and help people learn from each other's successes and mistakes. These capabilities can help government to better integrate and align its own strategic objectives with those of its partners

(Goldsmith & Eggers 2004, p. 108)

With policymaking becoming increasingly complex, policy processes are often too multifaceted to be managed solely by governments and government agencies need to seek perspectives from various actors on a range of issues (Klijn 1996). The traditional Public Administration model based on administrative hierarchies as 'one size fits all model' has proven insufficient to address the ever-changing needs of place communities. Policy networks in this context are alternatives to traditional forms of government and 'more or less stable patterns of social relations between independent actors, which take shape around policy problems and/or policy programmers' (Kickert et al 1997, p. 6) and provide a platform for the development of a shared vision that brings together all stakeholders and a blueprint for development. Networks that are purpose oriented can be aimed at delivering public services collectively or addressing 'wicked' or complex problems (Rethemeyer & Hatmaker 2008).[190]

Citizen participation has traditionally been considered a consultative endeavour in policy processes (Davis & Rhodes 2000). Residents' opinions rarely influence decision making as they are often consulted in later stages of place brand development (Bennett & Savani 2003). Post-modern ideas of the state as a separate entity to the political process, however, have positioned the 'community' discourse as an alternative political arena where government and citizens could meet, rethinking the relations between state, individual and civil society, in search of legitimacy through open decision-making processes and greater public engagement based on 'reciprocal responsibilities' (Black & Velostou 2017; Eversole 2009; Reddel 2002, p. 56; Therkelsen et al 2010). In this sense, processes based on network structures offer increased potential to deal with complex interactions and contestation, and enable greater flexibility in adapting solutions to the particular context of regions (Innes et al 2006; Giest & Howlett, p. 44). Policy networks as non-hierarchical structures based on horizontal coordination could assist place branding processes by allowing greater mobilisation of resources between public and private actors (Börzel 2011;

[190] This has become part of policy discussions in practice. In a recent research paper for the Politics and Public Administration Section of the Parliament of Australia, Homes (2011) argues that 'the desire by many democratic governments to promote social inclusion, build social capital, encourage more personal responsibility in matters such as health and retirement income security, and to broaden governments' capacity to address so-called 'wicked problems', has created a very favourable political and social climate for involving citizens in the co-production / co-design / co-creation of public services'.

Rhodes 1997). Policy networks could therefore improve the effectiveness of implementing public policies for place branding (Kooiman 2003).

Policy networks have received attention in the field of public administration due to their potential to support multi-stakeholder involvement between public and private administrations and are increasingly used to provide policy expertise, feedback and also service delivery (Eggers & Goldsmith 2004; Lecy et al 2014). In order to resituate policy networks in the place branding debate, it is important to further clarify my position on the often contested concepts of governance, networks, collaboration and coordination (Reddel 2002).

The concept of policy network introduced by Rhodes and Marsh as an alternative to pluralism-corporatism dominating public administration in 1960s (Börzel 2011, p. 50), was conceived as a tool for interest intermediation and redistribution of power and resources in democracies (Börzel 1992, p.4), and was characterised according to their degree of interaction (Rhodes 1988).[191]As I argue in Chapter Three, network analysis does not lead to the development of a typology of policy networks whose application could affect the policy process or its outcomes (Börzel 2011). The application of the network concept to governance goes beyond their role as analytical tools, to challenging the power of the state, and responding to the need for collaboration between state and non-state actors for effective public policy (Kenis & Schneider 1991; Rhodes 1997). Policy networks are the links between actors in politics and policy-making, and they are the various structures in which dynamics and relations occur (Knoke 1990). In the network, stakeholders formulate and strategise around their interests and exchange resources affecting public policy-making (Agranoff & McGuire 2003; Scharpf 1993).[192]

In this research I position networks as 'groups of three or more legally autonomous organisations that work together to achieve not only their own goals but also a collective goal' (Provan & Kenis 2007, p.231). Although networks may not be brokered, processes of decision around a network need to be based on the network structure and relations: namely trust, size, main objective and the nature of the process (Provan & Kenis 2007, pp. 234, 237). I introduce participant-governed networks as the simplest and most commonly used form of network governance (Provan & Kenis 2007, p. 231) to illustrate the suitability of policy networks as governance arrangements for place

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[191] Rhodes characterised networks by their degree of interaction: highly integrated policy communities, professional networks, inter-governmental networks, producer networks and loosely integrated issues networks (1990). In a review of Rhodes' contribution to the development of networks 'as a typology of state/society relations and as a particular form of governance', Börzel argues the importance of networks in public policy-making, and distinguishes between networks 'as tools to analyse interactions and relations between actors engaged in public policy-making' and 'networks \[as] specific types of interest intermediation' between state, business and civil society (2011, p. 49).

[192] In this sense Kavaratzis (2012) argues that perhaps investment needs to be diverted from promotional campaigns and the design of visual identities to furthering participation and two-way communication, measures which could, in turn, result in more cost-effectiveness.

branding. I acknowledge, however, that the structure proposed here would need to be adapted to the particularities of places since the network structure can influence policy processes and outcomes through altering interaction patterns (Marsh & Rhodes 1992a,b).[193]

Network structures have been observed and discussed in the field of place branding; for instance, Andersson and Ekman (2009) suggest an advisory board or supervisory group for ambassador networks that could be derived from 'planning groups' in place marketing, involving public and private stakeholders (Kotler 2002; Rainisto 2003).[194] Braun (2011) objects to this idea, given that potentially conflicted interests and political influences would affect the place's marketing and branding policies under such arrangement. This is perhaps due to city and nation brand managers' lack of branding and marketing knowledge and expertise, that tends to lead to product-oriented instrumental approaches to branding places to the detriment of collaboration for more effective practice (Hankinson 2001; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). Under a policy network-based model, policymaking could become more informal, based more on collaboration (Börzel 1998; Lowndes et al 1998). Policy networks, as alternative governance arrangements allow stakeholders to share information, resources and expertise (Thompson & Pforr 2005). Under this paradigm, collaborative policy-making is therefore seen as a two-way relationship between government and non-government actors that provides the necessary arena for debate that will lead to partnerships between both sectors, as well as redistribution of decision-making power among government and other stakeholders, including citizens (Edwards 2008).[195]

Since the aim of this research is to analyse the underlying relations between stakeholders in the process of branding places, I focus on structural change in place branding processes by adopting a governance approach focused on interactions and patterns between actors (Börzel 2011, p. 51).[196] This approach is summarised in Mayntz' description of the composition of policy networks (see quote below):

> Instead of emanating from a central authority, be this government or the legislature, policy today is in fact made in a process involving a plurality of both public and private organisations […] the notion of 'policy networks' does not so much represent a new analytical perspective but rather signals a real change in the structure of the polity (1993, p. 5).

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[193] Networks can be goal-directed (self-initiated or mandated) or respond to a specific purpose to be achieved through coordination; or contracted, see Provan and Kenis (2007).

[194] For a categorisation of public and private stakeholders, see Kotler et al (1999). Planning groups refer to place management and business communities of place (Rainisto 2003).

[195] For a review of collaborative policymaking and the concept of social capital, see Edwards (2008).

[196] Whilst the German literature on policy networks focuses on their role as a form of governance, the Anglo-Saxon tradition is concerned with policy network analysis to identify forms of interest intermediation (Börzel 1998). Both traditions recognise the need for cooperation and resource-sharing and therefore understand networks as 'structures of interaction between public and private actors through which public policies are made' (Börzel 2011, p. 51).

Maynz interprets policy networks as networked interactions of different organisations with a particular aim or interest in policy. The term network has become 'the new paradigm for the architecture of complexity' and indicates that 'policy networks [can be considered] as a typology of *interest intermediation* versus policy networks as a *specific form of governance',* bringing together private and public actors to obtain resources in public policy (Börzel 1998, p. 254). As a form of governance, policy networks are:

> […] a set of relatively stable relationships which are non-hierarchical and interdependent, linking a variety of actors who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that cooperation is the best way to achieve common goals (Börzel 1998, p. 254).

4.7.1 Of policy networks, governance and public administration

In their recent review of scholarship on networks in public administration, Lecy et al (2014) state that although the discipline of political science has been exploring the impact of networks on policymaking and governance (Berry et al 2004) a greater exchange between network traditions in sociology, political science and public administration is needed (2014, p. 644). However, caution needs to be applied, since other disciplines apply the concept of network to their particular contexts or frameworks. For instance, Weare et al (2014) build on cultural theory to study the 'collaborative policy network' where public agencies, advocacy groups, not-for-profit and for-profit firms engage in joint projects to achieve common goals by sharing resources and information to address particularly complex or as previously introduced 'wicked' problems, that require multi-stakeholder approaches:

> Given that collaborative policy networks constitute a hybrid organisational form mixing elements of market-based, hierarchical, and communal relationships, theorizing requires a framework for understanding the dynamics that arise when individuals and groups begin to operate within new sets of social relationships (Weare et al 2014, p. 612). [197]

As abovementioned, the network concept has been applied to many disciplines including destination management (Dredge 2006), to inform collaboration between government, private sector and civil society in policy-making. Network theory can help understand how relationships with stakeholders effect communication, mediation, resource sharing and collective action around a common goal, by focusing on the 'social interrelations of policymaking' as opposed to the outcomes (Dredge 2006, p.567). In fact, Rhodes did not develop policy networks into analytical tools, but rather focused on the power relationships inherent in networks. Originally focused on institutions, Rhodes shifted towards a social constructivist approach analysing how

[197] Weare et al (2014) study cultural theory to provide a framework for understanding the dynamics that arise from the interactions between individuals and groups within new sets of social relationships to explore hierarchical organisations and study the structural attributes to higher-performing networks.

networks change institutional structures through observing how people relate and respond to dilemmas in the network (Rhodes 2007a, p.82 in Börzel 2011).[198] This focus on stakeholder relationships rather than on the individual nodes of the network, I argue is relevant to the development of participatory place branding practices.

Although governance networks[199] focus on the relationships of actors in dealing with underlying complex issues, there are inconsistencies between typologies of networks in the various literatures (Lecy et al 2014; see also Klijn & Koppenjan 2012). In the governance field, Isset et al (2011, p. 161) distinguish three research clusters, including policy, collaborative and governance networks, and further explain that the aim of policy networks is to shape public decision-making, while that of collaborative networks is to deliver services and governance networks combine both aims. Mandell and Keast (2009), on the other hand, organise networks by their degree of horizontal integration: cooperative networks (least integrated, focused on disseminating information); coordination networks (participants align policies to attain outcomes); and collaborative networks (presenting a true integration and interdependence based on trust). Lecy et al, however, consider horizontal integration as an open-ended research question and embrace the umbrella term of 'policy network' but identify three stages in the policy process: formation, governance and policy implementation (2014, p. 648).[200] It is important to note that Lecy et al explain that the meaning of policy network can range from social networks of individuals to policy domains, or inter-organisational networks, sometimes presenting ties related to frequency of communication or shared beliefs or values or referring to formal agreements or partnerships (2014, p. 651). Lecy's (2004) concept of 'collaborative network' is composed of three stages of the policy process; formation, governance and policy implementation, and is

[198] In addition to varied literature focused on network management and effectiveness (Lewis 2011 in Willem & Lucidarme 2014, p. 735), the work of Rod Rhodes analyses policy networks as governance arrangements for government and civil society interactions, as well as social network analysis concerned with observing interpersonal relationships and structures of networks. While policy networks can inform development of policies, collaborative networks, conversely, refer to the governments' reliance on third parties for service, policy or value delivery. A phenomenon also referred to as new public governance and network governance, among others (Willem & Lucidarme 2014, p. 735). According to Provan and Kenis (2008, p. 231), networks are 'three or more legally autonomous organizations that work together to achieve not only their own goals but also a collective goal'.

[199] Although governance networks and policy networks are used interchangeably in the thesis, I acknowledge that others have identified differences (for a complete review of concept, see Klijn and Koppenjan 2012). While in the literature review I have retained the original terms chosen by the different scholars whose work is discussed, in my subsequent analysis, I employ the term 'policy network' to describe the (governance) mechanisms underpinning the social coordination of complex issues.

[200] Policy formation networks include those where diverse sets of actors form coalitions or interest groups and how these collective actors work together to shape the policy process. Networks of this type respond to perceived failures of state authorities to address problems and typically use horizontal cooperation to frame social problems as new agendas (Lecy et al 2014, p. 651). Policy networks and network governance are therefore a response to complex policy problems that cannot be effectively addressed by a single actor. Policy implementation networks are coordination mechanisms for public service delivery that are distinct from hierarchical organisations. These collaborative networks then respond to the need for hybrid forms of organising and collaborating. For a detailed review of scholarship on networks in public administration, see Lecy et al (2014).

useful when considering the relationships and patterns of interaction and communication of the network in charge of branding places. Ideally, such a network has to be a horizontal and interdependent structure where stakeholders enjoy a constant flow of shared information to inform specific strategies and actions related to complex issues, thereby leaving room for planning, implementation and assessment.

As outlined in Chapter Two, in the process of place branding, governments often only involve private actors in the policy process for informal and formal consultation. This might be in part due to governments acting as gatekeepers or exercising power and control over policy-making (Ind & Bjerke 2007). In addition, public-private-partnerships (PPP), although mistakenly also defined as networks (Osborne 2000) respond to a new public management approach in which non-governmental organisations assist governments in service delivery tasks. Public actors in this set up open room for joint decision-making and act as mediators between private actors (Kooiman 1993; Scharpf 1991). Networks are therefore also created by interactions between public and private spheres in complex settings that produce policy outcomes (Börzel 1997). PPP provide governments with a means to 'obtain resources and competencies they do not have or do not control', and to provide collective goods both in the domestic and international arenas (Börzel & Risse 2005). Although PPPs in public policy act as a pool of resources potentially increasing effectiveness, legitimacy, participation and accountability in governance, they have been criticised for advancing particular interests (Börzel 2011). However, PPP are key in sustainable development (Börzel et al 2002). The success of networks and PPP (Kavaratzis 2010), however, is challenging the government's authority and its capacity to address complex issues (Börzel 2011). For instance, Argiolas et al (2009) theorised PPP as an innovative way to manage relationships among stakeholders, and identified potential challenges to local governance through their analysis of a particular form of territorial PPP named Local Action Groups.

The network concept has also been applied to multi-level territorial governance, particularly in the EU context (Rhodes et al 1996). Network settings allow collective governance, amalgamating resources that governments cannot manage, and are horizontally coordinated offering a different governance or social order to markets (Kooiman 1993; Powell 2003; Rhodes 1997a). Where hierarchies organise societies by exercising control and markets self-regulate, networks base non-hierarchical coordination resource sharing and trust (Börzel 2010). Although a network structure seems to be a suitable alternative to the traditional, hierarchical and instrumental approach to branding places, as stated above, its application results in many challenges. Effectiveness and legitimacy of the network, for instance, are threatened by issues of power and particular interests, as well as compliance. Börzel (2010) argues that often effectiveness is dependent on government's role in providing the necessary stability for self-organisation to exist. One possible avenue to increase effectiveness is to increase compliance at the risk of potential impasses (Börzel 2011; O'Toole & Meier 2004). Despite the fact that both theory and empirical evidence have challenged the effectiveness, accountability and legitimacy of network governance (O'Toole & Meier 2004; Provan & Kenis 2008), highlighting concerns about the weakening role of government (Hellman et al 2000), networks seem to continue assisting governments in dealing with complex issues and providing collective goods and services (Börzel 2011). Other criticisms of network governance include the de-regulation of public services as opposed to the development of effective public services and the controversy of the accountability of policymakers, and the public scrutiny and lack of transparency or agency among others (Evans 2001; Knox et al 2006). From a critical stance, Börzel (2011) concludes that there is not enough empirical evidence that network governance is superior to market or governments. Rhodes (1997a), however, argues that managing networks is the key to their success and increasing their problem-solving capacities (see also Agranoff & McGuire 2003; Börzel 2011; Klijn et al 1995; Meier & O'Toole 2005). Since networks vary depending on their purpose, this research pays particular attention to the network's function as a knowledge generation mechanism for increased government effectiveness (Beisheim & Liese 2011; Provan & Milward 1995) in a governance 'mix' (Rhodes 1997a; Börzel 2010).

My research adopts a participant-governed network approach (Provan & Kenis 2008) to examine stakeholder engagement in place branding practice. In participant-governed networks, emphasis is not placed on the particular structure of governance (for instance, centralised or decentralised). The emphasis is on involving members in a democratic and all-inclusive process of governance, where participants manage both relationships and operations with all stakeholder groups to build capacity and increase commitment to the goals of the network (Provan & Kenis 2008).

4.7.2 Participant-governed policy networks

A participant-governed network (Provan & Kenis 2008), in which all stakeholders are equally represented in decision-making processes, represents a better structure for interest and conflict intermediation and allows better integration among members of the network (Börzel 2011; Koppenjan 2007). As abovementioned, the model presented is not particularly concerned with favouring a structure of the participant-governed network, since there are many possibilities for interaction and a myriad of contexts in different places. For instance, Burghard and Govers note how virtual brand communities are useful mechanism for interest negotiation towards long-term branding in the American case, and emphasize the 'cooperative and dynamic interactive social network where ideas can be shared' (2011, p. 184). Burghard and Govers draw from Gnoth's concept of brand communities, 'for it is only through value-oriented networked cooperatives and shared vision that a place brand community can evolve (2002, p. 269).[201]

In practice, different stakeholders influence decision–making by dominating the network's resources and acting as gatekeepers to protect their interests and power (Castells 2011).[202] This has led to a traditional leadership role of governments and public organisations, naturally risk averse and concerned with maintaining control. Consequently, stakeholder engagement at all levels, particularly public-private partnerships, but also leadership are key success factors in place branding (Rainisto 2003). The idea of leadership based on legitimacy becomes key to the functioning of the network and it is directly linked to issues of power.[203] Castells maintains that 'institutions and norms are constructed to fulfil the interests and values of those in power' (2011, p.773). Therefore, the understanding of leadership should not be based on legitimacy principles such as accountability and resource power, but rather on the capacity of the individual or organisation that acts as a 'weaver' to foster collaboration through knowledge and resource sharing in complex situations, and maintains a continuous flow of communication among the various network stakeholders.

It is important to note that in suggesting Provan and Kenis' model of participant-governed network in the intervention, I was not promoting this model as the most effective governance arrangement for place branding. Rather, the model was presented to participants as an example to encourage them to reflect on their practices and the issues and concerns they experienced, whilst comparing these to an alternative approach where relationships occured in a networked and horizontal manner and through collaboration and cooperation (see Appendix Six for more information on the model presented).

4.8 Conclusion

Reflecting on the impossibility of establishing static brand images (based on the true essence), or controlling place brands as socially constructed identities, I argue that there is a need to observe how stakeholders negotiate meaning about place in order to create a platform for engagement to collaboratively develop the identity of places and manage reputations accordingly. In such an arrangement, branding not only 'reinterprets national identity in market

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[201] This argument may be linked to the idea of 'communities of practice' as platforms where community, social practice and meaning about the place interact, see Wegner et al (2002).

[202] The role of the global civil society is now to resolve the issues and conflicts through multimedia communication networks. The way to do it is through 'social power', which is 'the construction of meaning in the human mind through processes of communication' (Castells 2011, p. 779). Global and at the same time local multimedia networks of mass self-communication and mass-communication constitute the new 'horizontal digital communication networks' (ibid).

[203] In fact, Slaughter suggests the term 'collaborative power' as 'the power of many to do together what no one can do alone' (Slaughter in Arsenault 2014, p. 193).

terms and provides new narratives for domestic consumption' (Jansen 2008, p. 122), but also informs policy-making that can support regional development (Anholt 2008; Bellini et al 2010). As argued above, network governance, and in particular policy networks, are peculiarly well suited to support collaborative place branding processes.

The aim of this dissertation is to study the underlying communication and power relationships between stakeholders in place branding practices, particularly in regional contexts, to reflect on how collective identity is constructed within particular 'organizations of power, knowledge and exchange' (Aronczyk 2008, p. 46). By identifying the constraints and instrumentality of traditional branding approaches, I propose an alternative networked governance model of place branding. Based on the literature, policy networks, in which the organic construction of meaning about places in the social network serves I argue not only as a platform for the constant development and redevelopment of a common vision for the place, but as an endeavour of public good (economic and social), and informs more concerted and holistic or all-encompassing approaches to communicating place brands.

Following Kavaratzis and Kalandides' (2015) call for empirical research on participatory place branding, in this dissertation I investigate the extent to which these associations interact in the network of stakeholders through a case study of Tasmania to argue that a participant-governed network (Provan & Kenis 2008) could represent a more effective structure for interest and conflict intermediation in branding places.

The intervention presented in this exploration of Tasmania's place branding network aims to provide empirical data on the structure and challenges of a particular network[204]. The aim is to analyse the particular disconnect in stakeholder engagement observed in the process of place branding and provide a ground-breaking exploration of a collaborative networked governance model of place branding to operationalise participatory branding practices. The analysis of stakeholders' interactions (or lack of interaction) in terms of dialogue and decision making around enhancing Tasmania's brand relevance internationally is based on the relationships among such stakeholders, the output of their interactions, and the consequences in terms of current development of public policies aiming at projecting a positive image and reputation for the place that may result in economic advancement and social development. The research invites

[204] The intervention follows a before-and-after approach linked to the method of sociological intervention. The model presented here is aimed at exploring how things can be done differently. Although it is a less common methodology in the social sciences and departs from mainstream approaches to collecting data, it is widely used in the cognitive sciences and useful to gather and reflect on the data based on a quasi-real scenario.

representation from all stakeholder groups to reflect on the dynamics and evolution of network achievements, pitfalls and potential to brand or rebrand Tasmania.

My argument is based on qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and a series of focus groups interventions provide the context of Tasmania, the network under study. Through these interventions a potential new model is tested, to explore the possibilities of interaction between stakeholders under such a new collaborative framework, outside the existing hierarchical practices of stakeholder engagement, and based on specific calls for help in implementing short-term marketing and branding approaches to project positive images and a positive reputation of Tasmania. The next chapter provides an overview of the methodology applied in this case-study.

PART II

INVESTIGATING AN ALTERNATIVE PARTICIPANT-GOVERNED NETWORK APPROACH: A CASE STUDY OF TASMANIA

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 Introduction

It would therefore be a logical step to expand this research to include not only the positioning of images, but also the role and development of brand identities that form the basis of brand communications.

(Hankinson 2010, p. 311)

As a former practitioner of place branding and public diplomacy, my interest in the topic is the point of departure of this dissertation. My experience suggested the need to consider *how* place branding occurs, and in particular, how better interrelations among stakeholders could develop more effective practices. Built into my perception of 'disengaged' stakeholders and often 'contested' brand messages, I noticed were particularly those coming from residents, locals and citizens (civil society). This lower level of identification with the brand does not promote authenticity, recognition, acceptance and commitment by the local community (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 918). Following an extensive review of the literature I realised that, beyond a simple campaign or consultative process, place branding should perhaps be framed as a governance mechanism informing policy and place development. A review of the literature suggested the need to analyse stakeholder interactions with a view to alternative governance arrangements, and thus the research design outlined below was chosen to investigate these aspects further.

In a review of methodologies used in place branding, Chan and Marafa (2013) argue the need for more integrated research approaches. The present research design responds to this call in two ways. First, employing action research, this study seeks to improve practice and advance research through action (Herr & Anderson 2005). More specifically, as argued in the the first three chapters of this dissertation through an extensive literature review on the paradigm of co-creation in the construction of place brand identities, the study explores more holistic approaches to participatory place branding.[205] It aims to observe the relational and interactional dynamics of stakeholders engaged in the *process* of creating and communicating place brand identities, in order to to better operationalise participatory place branding practices.

The main objective of the Tasmanian case study, presented in this chapter, was to explore the process of place branding, and in particular the relationship between participatory governance

[205] Similarly, this literature review combined insights from participatory governance, policy networks, public diplomacy and the network society, to reveal an evident gap in theory and practice regarding the way in which place managers can meaningfully engage with stakeholder groups in the process of co-creation of brand identities (Zavattaro 2015).

arrangements and effective place branding practices. The intention is to expand analysis of network structures to consider the network's social interactions and communication dynamics (Knoke & Yang 2008). The design includes conceptual research based on the literature review, and a case study based on field research following participatory action research methodology. The study is situated in the broader topic area of stakeholder engagement and, in particular, participatory place branding (Chan & Marafa 2013; Kavaratzis 2016).

In addition to questioning and testing network dynamics, a second aim of the study was to investigate the operationalisation of participatory place branding through policy networks, to design an alternative governance arrangement that encourages holistic and collaborative processes of co-creation of place identities. The study does this by providing an account of the patterns of interaction and communication, issues and underlying dynamics in stakeholder relations in the process of branding places, and by exploring the motivations, interests and sometimes contested agendas revealed in branding places in a regional context. The research also aims to obtain participants' insights and responses to a suggested alternative governance approach to branding places in a quasi-real scenario, thus providing recommendations for the operationalisation of participatory place branding practices. The sections to follow outline the empirical foundations, objectives and methods used for data collection and analysis used in this investigation.

5.2 Methodology

In an era of globalisation it is becoming increasingly important for individual towns, regions and countries to have a distinct presence to attract industry, tourists, international students and cultural events among other things. To date, theory and practice for place branding has been dominated by the marketing and management literatures revealing the traits of an economic development logic.

Empirically situated within the process of place branding as a tool for regional development and how it has been traditionally conducted and influenced by marketing and management principles (see Chapter Two), the case study is framed by the instrumentality and lack of success of current approaches to branding places, typically consisting of top-down, government-led strategic exercises to distil what a place is and how it should be perceived by foreign audiences. The study breaks ground by operationalising an alternative participatory governance framework for participatory place branding. Thus, the objectives are two-fold: exploring the *process* of interaction or *how* participants relate to each other in place branding setting, and testing an alternative model for interaction following a reflection on the issues for collaboration and inform an alternative theory and practice.

Building on recent literature in the fields of communications, the network society, public diplomacy, governance and in particular policy networks, as well as on my past practical experience in the field, I aim to assess whether an alternative governance model for place branding is possible. The new approach envisages a more active and engaged role of stakeholders, particularly for civil society actors, via the development of a horizontal and non-linear network of communication and collaboration. The case study employs action research to investigate the effect in the place branding process of alternative holistic forms of stakeholder engagement, through participants' analysis and reflections on the different and often contested strategies they adopt in their practice, as well as their insights on the communication dynamics that currently exist among them. The case study also explores participants' responses to an alternative participant-governed network model of governance for place branding as an approach to operationalise a participatory place branding process. Furthermore, the case study considers whether, by reflecting on their practice, participants could engage in a new framework of common understanding and collaboration.

The philosophical framework adopted is based on the dynamic interaction between the literature review and the research problem and favours qualitative research as the most appropriate paradigm to assess the social construction of place identities (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011, p.35). The approach adopted differs from the interpretivist position of the role of the researcher. Although interpretivist approaches employ case studies to analyse how the group under study understands the context in which they operate, the researcher's own constructions are included in the analysis along with those of participants (Guba & Lincoln in Díaz Andrade 2009).[206] My role as a researcher is rather that of facilitator, enabling the creation and structuring of knowledge by participants. This choice reflects my interest in fostering participants' capacity to autonomously create knowledge and potentially solve complex problems through alternative governance arrangements. Qualitative approaches follow inductive reasoning based on the exploration of open-ended questions, and differ from other epistemologies in that they do not assume that there is a predictable reality to be tested, but rather a problem to be explored (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011).

The context of this case study of place branding as a regional governance strategy emerges from a broader concern regarding the process of branding places at any level (town, city, region, state).

[206] The interpretive stance premises that the environment affects human behaviour and thus it is critically important to understand the social and cultural context of the subject of study, since reality is socially constructed through actions and interactions in a certain environment (Guba & Lincoln; Orlikowski & Baroudi in Díaz Andrade 2009; Willis et al 2007 p. 6), and calls for researchers' direct involvement in fieldwork and analysis (Creswell 1998 in Díaz Andrade 2009). Furthermore, interpretive case studies are not concerned with the politics of the phenomenon under study, in this case place branding (Willis et al 2007 p. 6).

Since my specific research objective is to explore stakeholder interactions in the process of co-creation of brand identities, the primary focus and unit of analysis is the stakeholders, their interrelationships and interactions. The data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group interventions, with the analysis informed by field notes and archival data provided by participants or accessed during the literature review process. Consequently, the qualitative analysis of the data collected goes beyond the study of content to explore the social interactions through discourse (Babbie 2016).

From the analysis I argue that by exploring stakeholders' different and often contested strategies and interactions in place branding, it is possible not only to outline a series of issues and impediments to collaboration, but also to identify opportunities for further engagement through collaborative network governance arrangements. I argue that the proposed new framework for co-creation of place brand identities, based on knowledge-sharing and collaboration could potentially lead to more effective branding of places. The intervention presented in this case study aims to test the suitability of alternative participatory governance arrangements, ultimately to inform both theory and practice.

This single case study was conducted in the Australian island state of Tasmania. A cohort of participants involved directly and indirectly in local, regional and state-wide strategies for branding Tasmania, or as I referred to in the interviews '*putting Tasmania on the map'* were invited to participate in the research project. The background details of the particular regional context of Tasmania are outlined in Chapter Five.[207]

5.2.1 Justification

Exploratory studies are valuable in social research, and essential when research is breaking new ground, and are the most appropriate method to investigate issues underlying complex processes like place branding (Babbie 2013, p. 95). Action and participatory forms of research offer, in addition, appropriate avenues to marry practitioners' wealth of knowledge and academic perspectives (Herr & Anderson 2005),[208] where surveys and other quantitative research methods conducted in isolation (lack of contact between participant-researchers and participant-participant) are unable to represent such interactions (Bryman 2015). Therefore, in this research

[207] Due to the lack of conceptual clarity and to avoid potential biases on participants' responses, I decided to use 'putting Tasmania on the map' to refer to place branding, encompassing from destination branding and COO, to reputation management.
[208] Practitioners refers to participants, in this case all stakeholders engaged in branding Tasmania.

I utilise qualitative methods of field research that involve active inquiry and self-reflection towards critically observing a phenomenon based on communicative action (Habermas 1971).[209]

The approach follows from the purpose of this research and aims to investigate an under-researched aspect of social life, namely, the interaction between stakeholders in place branding processes (Hesse-Biber & Leacy 2011).[210] I am particularly concerned with evaluating the current structures of strategic governance embedded in the practice of place branding, as well as exploring practical alternative arrangements for more participatory practices. I also expect the applicability of the findings to extend beyond specific administrative and political forms of territories, to be adaptable to any size and composition of 'place', from countries, to regions, cities and neighbourhoods, thus generating both *local knowledge* and *public knowledge* (Herr & Anderson 2005, p. 10). I place special emphasis on ensuring the validity and application of the findings in both theory and practice to address scholarly concerns about participatory research leading to 'epistemic claims beyond the practice settings' and the production of knowledge that is 'practice-driven' rather than 'theory-driven' (Herr & Anderson 2005, p. 52).

5.2.2 Research question

Qualitative research and in particular, action research through case studies, provides an open format to observe processes and practices (Herr & Anderson 2005).[211] Since I seek to explore a problem rather than test a theory, this study does not introduce a particular set of hypotheses, but rather aims to explore a set of questions or propositions, namely:

- What are the interaction and communication dynamics between stakeholders in the process of place branding?
    - How and to which extent do stakeholders engage in place branding processes?
    - To what extent do stakeholders collaborate in their attempts to brand places?
- How can we operationalise participation in place branding processes?
    - Under which conditions is participation effective and legitimate in place branding processes?

[209] Action research as a tool for organisational development has observed the link between democratic organisation development and language and communication in the public sphere. This perspective draws on work on postmodern theories of language and discourse. For a detailed list of publications in this area, observing the works, among others, of Habermas, Wittgenstein, and Vygotsky; see Herr and Anderson (2005, p. 13).

[210] Descriptive and explanatory research emphasise the need to describe or explain certain aspects of social life, the exploratory approach adopted in this dissertation (Hesse-Biber & Leacy 2011).

[211] Action research has gained importance particularly in the fields of organisational development, education, social work, criminology, nursing, public health, international development and agriculture (Herr & Anderson 2005).

- Do policy networks provide legitimate and effective governance arrangements for participatory place branding?
  - Are participant-governed policy networks more inclusive, participatory and effective governance arrangements to brand places?

Thus, the aim of this dissertation is to research the *process* of branding places, in particular the governance arrangements that underlie practice, to suggest and explore alternative participatory arrangements.

5.3 Case study

> *Case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.*
>
> *(Yin 2003, p. 1)*

When designing this research, I took into consideration a need for research and scholarly observations on the methodologies and methods utilised in place branding research. The aim was to present a research design that not only suited the aim of this dissertation, but supports advancing research (Chan & Marafa 2013). The dominant approach to research in place branding is qualitative, although scholars have recognised a need for advancing quantitative and mixed methods (Chan & Marafa 2013; Lucarelli 2012; Lucarelli & Berg 2011; Zenker 2011).[212] Furthermore, research on stakeholder relationships often include qualitative in-depth explorations of attitudes, usually conducted through focus groups or in-depth interviews (see, for instance, Hankinson 2001; Ooi & Pedersen 2010). This is in part because garnering information on place identity requires an analysis of place culture alongside researcher' observations (Andersson 2007).

In addition, current issues around stakeholder engagement on place branding are mainly explored through case studies in academia, (Gernter 2001; Zenker 2011; Lucarelli & Brörstrom 2013), and meta-surveys (Eshuis et al 2011), or qualitative interviews (Hankinson 2001). This study therefore responds to a need for academics to develop larger state-wide studies (Jorgensen 2015, p. 69). Therefore, the choice of 'case study' as the methodology to consider the phenomenon and process of place branding has two justifications (Yin 2003). Firstly, the method is well-established and recognised in social research and is extensively used in the social sciences, including anthropology, political science, public policy and sociology (Gilgun 1994 in Yin

[212] In particular, qualitative methods dominate in the research of place identity (Chan & Marafa 2013).

2003). Secondly, it is the most used method in the existing literature on place branding (Chan & Marafa 2013).

As Yin (2003) explains, case studies provide *analytical generalisation* based on theoretical propositions, whereas other methodologies offer *statistical generalisations*.[213]

The main strength of case studies is their ability to deal with different forms of evidence, such as interviews, observations and so forth, beyond historical accounts of phenomena (Yin 2003). Despite its widespread use in the literature, concerns around this method need to be observed, including the scholarly debate on the validity of action research linked to the role and presence of researchers in relation to traditional positivistic or naturalistic approaches based on the observation of a phenomenon through cause-and-effect (Herr & Anderson 2005). All concerns are addressed and further explained through the description of the method in the sections to come.[214]

Within the case study, I situate my interest in participatory action research (PAR), focusing not only on building or testing theory, but also in enacting social change and developing collaborative solutions to complex or 'wicked problems'. In line with Maklan et al (2008), I argue that change can be generated as a result of self-reflection. In this setup, action research has 'the merit of privileged access to reality' (Perry & Gummesson 2004, p. 318), particularly in 'turbulent environments' (Daniel & Wilson 2004).[215] Furthermore, I adopt a PAR methodology not only to observe a social setting in isolation to develop new theoretical knowledge, but also to broaden the scope and encourage social action as a result of enhancing collaboration and learning in social contexts (Freire 1970 in Herr & Anderson 2005). I do this while monitoring stakeholder dynamics and governance arrangements for place branding. This participatory approach focuses on collaboration, empowerment, change and the political aspects of the phenomenon under

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[213] Case studies can often be combined with ethnography and participant-observation data to make sense of the data collected (Yin 2003). Examples of criticism to the method include: from a positivist position (Díaz Andrade 2009), Yin (2003) reflects on the validity of case studies in informing theory and practice and the apparent lack of rigour of research in case studies, and suggests bias and a lack of basis for scientific generalisation as the main concerns in case study research; furthermore, Gertner is concerned with qualitative studies of place branding being based on 'personal opinions and presented in an essay and editorial fashion' or being 'overtly factual and prescriptive', and 'do not advance testable models' (2011b, p. 101).

[214] Yin (2003) suggests that this might be caused by the confusion between case study teaching and case study research. In case study teaching the materials are altered to aid demonstrations.

[215] Daniel & Wilson (2004) argue the appropriateness of action research in such context because of the focus on immediacy of outcomes, future orientation respect for practitioner as co-producers of knowledge and the cyclical nature of the process. Other approaches might vary, according to their focus and purpose, whether the aim is to create or test knowledge (post positivism and constructivism), effect practice (pragmatism) or effect social interactions and relationships (participatory) (Creswell 2009; Yin 2003).

study.[216] The diagram below outlines the elements of my research approach linked to the various components of the research design:

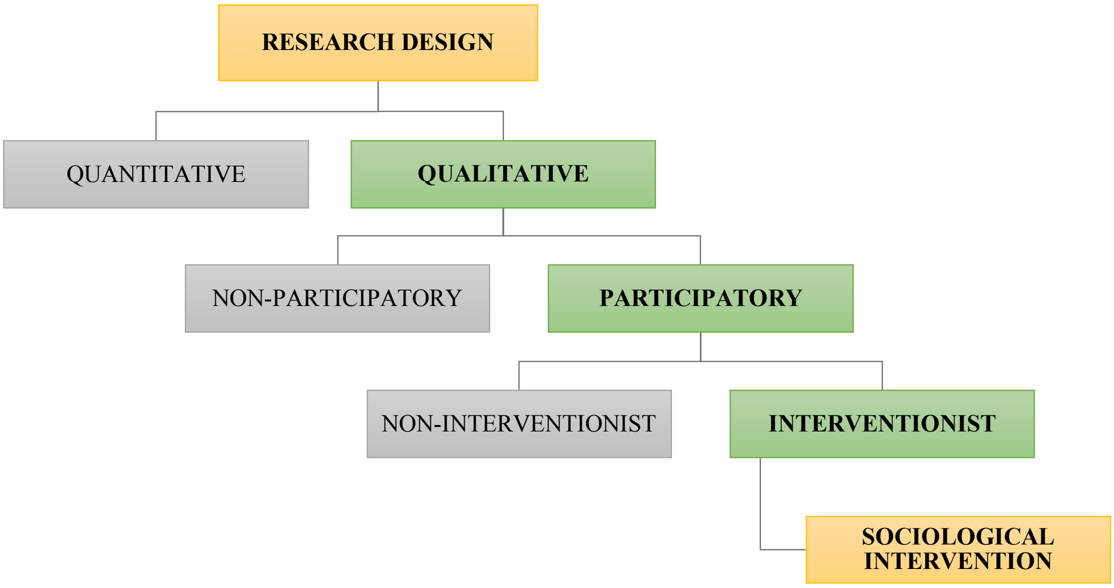

Figure 11. Research Design for Inclusive Place Branding (author's own elaboration).

The choice of PAR for this case study also follows the realisation of the limitations of purely collecting information around 'what has been done', and led to the choice of other options of more dynamic and social knowledge-producing techniques, such as focus groups, and the method of sociological intervention (Barbour 2007, Touraine 1978). Furthermore, the case study methodology allows for more holistic approaches to design, data collection and analysis (Yin 2003, p. 14).

The sociological intervention (SI) method was developed to observe social movements as 'a conflict between actors over the social management of a cultural issues which is never completely reducible to the self-interest of one party or the other' (Touraine 2000, p. 113).[217] The SI method and my analysis are therefore situated in the *critical* tradition of action research, since it focuses

[216] Action research is rarely used in the study of place branding. This may be due to the fact that 'published academic studies using action research in the scholarly marketing literature are rare, possibly due to lack of reflective practice and organisational barriers' (Kates & Robertson 2004 in Merrilees et al 2009). In fact, there are many contrasts between marketing and action research. While marketing research focuses on the present in obtaining representative samples in subjects as the objects of the study and active and highly specialised researchers (Maklan et al 2008), action research is 'values-laden and interdisciplinary', aiming at improving practice towards the future.

[217] Brincker & Gundelach (2005) argue that this notion is similar to Bordieu's concept of 'social field', defined as '… a network or configuration of objective relationships between different positions. The positions are defined… on the basis of their current and potential place in relation to the distribution of various forms of power (or capital)' (Bordieu & Macquant 1992, p. 84 in ibid, p. 368). The social field is considered the network in which relationships between actors lead to collective action.

on conflict and social change, as opposed to the *integrative* tradition concerned with social integration and evaluation, rather than their potential for change (Brincker & Gundelach 2005).[218]

Contrary to deductive theories where variables are laid out in advance, this research project is inductive in identifying possible relevant variables through the research fieldwork, and then classifying and aggregating them thematically for the analysis. In this sense, case studies as evaluation research tools assist the exploration of complex and unresolved situations (Patton 1990 in Yin 2003). Thus, where relevant sometimes lengthy quotations and excerpts are provided to contextualise participants' meanings and logical processes (Myers & Macnaghten 1999).

5.3.1 Research paradigm: Participatory Action Research

> *Action research… aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to further the goals of social science simultaneously. Thus, there is a dual commitment in action research to study a system and concurrently to collaborate with members of the system in changing it in what is together regarded as a desirable direction. Accomplishing this twin goal requires the active collaboration of researcher and client, and thus it stresses the importance of co-learning as a primary aspect of the research process.*
>
> *(Gilmore et al 1986, p.161 in Hesse-Biber & Leacy 2011, p. 50)*

In this thesis, action research is used to explore the place branding process in two ways: theorising and taking action, with action then based on theorising (Karlsen 1991, p.1 45).[219] Although the use of PAR does not imply specific actions and outcomes, this research aims to empower individuals to realise the potential of collaborative and participatory approaches to enact change by developing practical, real-world solutions (Chevalier & Buckles 2013). PAR presents a more organic and bottom-up process to explore complex governance issues than others in traditional social science research (Chevalier & Buckles 2013, Karlsen 1991).[220]

The PAR paradigm allows the researcher to serve as a resource to those being studied, as well as an opportunity for them to work on their own issues and interests (Babbie 2013, p. 321). This approach posits that research acts not only as a means of knowledge production, but also as a 'tool for the education and development of consciousness as well as mobilisation of action'

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[218] This approach is typically used in multidisciplinary projects and differs from post-positivism and the interpretive approaches primarily in its focus on the study of power relations within a particular social context in which place identities are constructed, with perhaps a secondary focus on social justice (Hesse-Biber & Leacy 2011).
[219] To understand how this paradigm differs from others, Whyte distinguishes between three types of research according to the degree of user participation through the research process: preparation of reports and theoretical analysis (problem-oriented); making changes to an organisation (by allowing participation of users making decisions about solutions developed and proposed by researchers); and 'participatory action research', that engages users in all phases of a research project (in Karlsen 1991, p. 145). Similar distinctions are often observed in place branding practice in which citizens have different roles in the process of decision-making, ranging from being passively consulted to being active participants (Braun et al 2013).
[220] Despite criticism for failing to meet traditional standards of scientific rigour (Herr & Anderson 2005).

(Gaventa 1991, p. 121-22). In PAR, once participants see themselves as researchers, they regain power over knowledge and acquire a voice to instigate change (Babbie 2013; see also Herr & Anderson 2005). Therefore, PAR often involves disadvantaged groups that are less typically able to influence policies and actions that affect their daily lives, and in this case, are members of civil society or residents of the place.[221]

Participatory action research as a *process* allows participants to actively participate in the study of their communities or organisations, from the initial design phase to the discussion of implications of research (Whyte in Karlsen 1991 p. 147). In addition, particular methods of action research, such as SI, allow participants to actively create knowledge by following a researcher's established design.[222] Action research can thus lead to innovation beyond the advances in theory, and the researcher can contribute to evaluation and problem-solving processes, fostering interactions, leadership and change in organisation models, as opposed to top-down reform policies (Karlsen 1991).[223]

A review of the use of action research, and particularly in focus groups in the social sciences (especially in the fields of place branding, marketing, public diplomacy, international relations, politics and sociology) suggested an innovative method that fulfils most requirements of my proposed research: the method of *sociological intervention.* The method was developed by French sociologist Alain Touraine (1978) in his quest to study identity formation in social movements, and is applied here to explore the dynamics and interactions between the different stakeholders involved in the process of *co-creation* of place identities.[224] Furthermore, through the interventions, participants assess the applicability of an alternative participant-governed

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[221] This is not to say that all residents experience disadvantage, for instance. What I am particularly interested is in observing the disconnection and often neglected role of civil society or residents in the place branding process, a topic of interest in the literature of place branding (Andersson & Ekman 2009; Braun et al 2012; Choo et al 2001; Freire 2007; Garcia et al 2012; Gower 2008; Hem & Iversen 2004; Insch & Florek 2008; Kavaratzis 2016).

[222] The Scandinavian traditional approach to research employs action research to build theories and descriptions that could be tested through intervention experiments, with the double aim to test hypotheses and effect change in a particular situation, in line with the approach of this research. Participants in this approach take part in all stages, although they do not necessarily share the same expertise as the researcher. The researcher is then concerned with reflecting on and understanding what the action process is about, documenting and analysing it, as well as making use of technical knowledge to confirm the researcher's assumptions. In this view, the researcher withdraws from the field once the action process has concluded and under this setting it seems reasonable to maintain the analytical distinction between research and action. This, however, does not prevent the action process as a common arena for dialogue, reflection, and learning, from being the central aspect to which the researcher also must relate herself. With regard to the research conducted for this study, although I did not ask the participants to take any specific actions, I hoped that action can be a result of the research should participants choose to do so (as outlined in the information sheets distributed to participants). See Karlsen (1991).

[223] Karlsen's (1991) approach attempts to solve complex problems and situations that call for teamwork and mutual commitment of several interested parties.

[224] In this research, I have adapted the method of SI to successfully obtain data reflecting the views and perspectives of those engaged in place branding, as well as their interactions and communication patterns in the process of place branding. The research design is informed by Touraine's SI method, that allows the study of the social dynamics of collective identity.

networked governance model to operationalise participatory place branding, based on Provan and Kenis' model of participant-governed policy networks (2008). The SI method was adapted to the constraints and particularities of the present research project, and its application to public administration, governance, and place branding. The particularities of the method are discussed below.

5.4 Method: Sociological Intervention

> *[Sociological intervention] starts from the idea that the nature of a collective behaviour can be best known by interpreting the work performed by a group of actors as it analyses its own actions under conditions created by researchers and managed by both parties.*
>
> *(Touraine 1978, p. 296)*

The sociological intervention method, unlike other types of group interviews aimed at discovering actors' feelings, seeks to discover the social relations and cultural orientations that shape collective action, as well as differentiating between the various logics of collective action (Dubet & Wieviorka 1996, pp. 56, 63). This method and its adaptation for the purposes of this research is outlined in the sections below.

5.4.1 Background to SI

Alain Touraine (1978) developed SI as an analytical method for the sociology of action, and the technique was aimed at ensuring general conceptions, not only about social action but also about society. The method responded to both theoretical and historical motivations (ibid). Touraine interpreted the societal changes by testing hypotheses and discovering the signs of the social movements he observed, as well as the struggles played out on the social stage (Dubet & Wieviorka 1996).[225]

The method of SI aims to observe the work performed by groups and their evolution, beyond noting what has been said by the members, but rather by focusing on the analytical attitude of the group (Dubet & Wieviorka 1996, p. 61). In this context, the group members share the objective of producing knowledge and increasing effectiveness, although the type of knowledge pursued by the research might be different (*ibid*). Touraine and Melucci were the main advocates for this method of research, and centred their methodology on the usage of focus groups as a complement for traditional ethnographic approaches, longitudinal studies and interview-based research (see, for a practical example, North 1998).

Similarly, Munday reflects on the intervention method as a tool to research the interactions between participants in the formation of collective identities in social movement theory (Castells

[225] Similarly, Touraine wanted to study the role of the sociologist as a researcher in his study of identity formation in social movements.

1997; Melucci 1996), emphasising both content and context in the 'process of interaction, negotiation and affirmation through which such an identity is produced and sustained' (2006, p. 90).[226] The rationale behind the choice of the SI method lays in the fact that it allows engaging discussions with no practical consequences, ensuring that participants have the freedom to voice their opinions.[227] In the SI method, 'groups have to be sheltered from everyday issues and activities so that members enjoy maximal freedom' (Dubet & Wieviorka, 1996, p. 61). Therefore, an SI group is not a 'real group' and the interlocutors do not necessarily have contact with the members in everyday life.

5.4.2 The link between SI and participatory place branding

> *[SI is an] active, analytical method for discerning the logics of action within a social struggle in which the social scientist proposes analyses to the actors and involve them in analysing their action.*
>
> *(Dubet & Wieviorka 1996, p. 57)*

The method of SI acts not only a tool to collect data, but also as the basis for collective action, requiring participants to be willing to consider social change.[228] Touraine's method is based on his social theory of the struggle over information of the programmed society in the cultural arena (Brincker & Gundelach 2005, p. 366). This is in line with Castells' (1996) arguments on the structure of the network society in the information age, and is relevant to this case study because it focuses on the collective creation of group identities, which can be linked to Hatch and Schultz's paradigm of brand co-creation adapted to place branding by Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013).

The method, however, has been criticised by its lack of theoretical clarity about how to achieve change (Bourdieu 1999 in Brincker & Gundelach 2005).[229] In this research project, I am interested in identifying the interactions that could potentially lead to change, as opposed to recording particular outcomes. Beyond the pure analysis of their reflections, the SI method allows participants to realise their potential to enact social change, unlike other sociological methods, such as focus groups (ibid). In addition, this process of realisation, through knowledge-sharing, dialogue, conflict and contestation are key to helping tease out group patterns (Brincker & Gundelach 2005).

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[226] In the field of place branding, little research has been devoted to observing the interaction between different stakeholder groups through focus group discussions.
[227] In reality, stakeholders operate in highly constraining contexts, in which place branding processes respond to short term crisis of image and reputation about a particular place (Anholt 2009).
[228] The method was used in sociology, and considering that sociologists' work is not only bounded to mapping out aspects of society, but can also be aimed at creating social change (Brincker & Gundelach 2005).
[229] For a detailed account of such criticism, see Bourdieu and Reynard (1974).

In Touraine's view, the definition of an actor's identity places him against his opponents and helps identify the issues that both bring actors together and sets them at odds (Dubet & Wieviorka 1996, p. 56).[230] This is particularly relevant to this research, since the aim is to capture *action,* both related to the struggles and processes underlying place branding practices.[231] By applying the SI method I aim to unlock the hierarchical restrictions among the different stakeholders involved in the process of branding places, to then explore their views on an alternative, non-linear, collaborative network governance approach.[232] Furthermore, I argue that the intervention process assists, not only in observing the interactions, but also enhances practical knowledge sharing and collaboration, ultimately supporting positive actions and alignments in place branding practices. 'Together, researchers and actors try to develop a working method for bringing to light the hierarchy of meanings that shape a collective action' (Dubet & Wieviorka, p. 57). Such an analysis, however, can bring about tension, and draw apart the different parties.

The SI method represents an interesting new approach to the way the phenomenon of place branding has been previously researched, leading way to new findings and hypotheses to be tested in further post-doctoral work. As Munday argues, 'rather than a blueprint for research, their [Touraine and Melucci's] work is best seen as a basis for developing group based research' (2006, p. 94). Therefore, the method was adapted to the particularities of this research project. In particular, the role of the researcher and the research stages were adapted to the aims and resources of this thesis. Such changes are explained in the sections following.

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[230] Touraine's (1978) analytical theory of social action considers that orders or levels of meaning and social relations are organised and ranked in a hierarchy within, for instance, any social struggle. Touraine formulates this as the interplay between the principles of *identity*, *opposition* and *totality*.

[231] Touraine (1981) developed the SI method to provide a dynamic account of social processes, as opposed to historical and static factual accounts.

[232] The method of SI has since its origins evolved from studying a social movement or collective action towards the conditions for increasing the capacity for individuals to act autonomously. SI now focuses on social problems rather than organised struggles, although the main principles remain, since 'action is placed in the context of social relations; actors are deemed to be capable of performing a specific sort of work to obtain knowledge about their behaviours; and sociologists must intervene and become 'involved' (Dubet & Wieviorka 1996).

5.5 The role of the researcher

The researcher may plan a role that entails varying degrees of 'participantness' –that is, the degree of actual participation in daily life. At one extreme is the full participant, who goes about ordinary life in a role or set of roles constructed in the setting. At the other extreme is the complete observer, who engages not at all in social interaction and might even shun involvement in the world being studied. And, of course, all possible complementary mixes along the continuum are available to the researcher.

(Marsall & Rossman 1995, p. 60 in Babbie 2013, p. 307)

In this study, I act as a participant observer, with full-time presence in the scene, observing the social setting as a whole. I acknowledge that there is a matter of *reflexivity* affecting my observations and interpretations (Babbie 2013 p. 310)[233] and I adopt here Herr and Anderson's idea of *reciprocity* in action research, defining my status and position as insider-outsider (2005, p. 31). Herr and Anderson applied the notion of *reciprocity* in collaborative forms of participatory action, aimed at levelling power relations by contributing to organisational transformation in what they consider probably the most democratic approach to research (2005, p. 31). Concerned with the necessity of clarification and negotiation of roles in participatory research, the authors further labelled researcher's participation as co-learning with participants, in which 'local people and outsiders share their knowledge to create new understanding and work together to form action plans, with outsider participation', as opposed to straight forms of collective action in which 'local people set their own agenda and mobilise to carry it out in the absence of outside initiators and facilitators' (Herr & Anderson 2005, p. 40).

Although I am inserted in the communities I study, my role in this dissertation also differs from that of the ethnographer in that I am not aiming to provide participants' observations in applied research (Herr & Anderson 2005). My background as a marketer and practitioner in place branding, however, facilitated the development of partnerships with participants in the development of PAR. It also assisted me in understanding the constraints participants experienced in their practice and through the interventions, and to relate to their understandings of place branding. This contributed to a clear outline of the benefits of participating, legitimising their time investment in the project, and presenting a format both appealing and useful to their practices.

[233] Other types of research, such as surveys or experiments avoid questions of reflexivity. Whilst positivism argues a 'dichotomous' model based on a rigid and hierarchical division between researcher and researched, this dissertation focuses on the equal relationship between researcher and participants in the production of knowledge (Hesse-Biber & Lecy 2011, p.8).

In my application of the SI method, I act as facilitator of collective debate, guiding the discussion to explore the many layers of the issues under review, and whose functions are, following Dubet and Wieviorka's outline of the researcher or interlocutor:[234]

1. To place actors in a social relationship: assessing the relevance of those links, the stability and the role as opposition forces;
2. To keep the group from shutting itself up in its ideology or ideas: since discourses often do not correspond to feelings and expectations;[235] and
3. To bring up questions that participants' ideology underlying collective action tries to cover up (1996, p. 59).

My double role as insider and outsider poses an additional dilemma. As Anderson et al emphasise, researchers need to find the balance between 'going native' and taking aspects of their practice for granted from an outsider perspective (1994, p. 27). In field research, particularly when using semi-structured interviews and focus groups, the 'conversational' aspect of the research context or setup puts the researcher in a more equal position of knowledge. Scientific objectivity in the context of this study regards the relationships of power or status relationships between the researcher and the participants. Therefore, in this adaptation of the SI method, I strive to empower participants to create the knowledge in its entirety.

5.6 Design composition

The design presented in this dissertation is iterative. Responding to fieldwork and analysis of data collected, the model was further enhanced and the line of questioning was constantly redesigned. As Babbie argues, qualitative field research allows for greater depth of understanding

[234] Melucci (1989) advocated for an adaptation of the SI method to observe social actors as 'constructed' entities and emphasised the need to observe the relationship between the Researcher and participant as part of the analysis to ensure reflexivity. Melucci (1996) identifies the influencing role of the researchers in the SI method, and advocates for an abandonment of the quest for agreement for the purpose or *raison d'être* of the social movement, and an observation of the interactions instead, emphasising the need to observe the inherent role of the researcher as an active participant. However, in research I am concerned with observing the interactions of participants in the process of achieving a common goal (branding Tasmania). This differs from the nature of social movements in search of their purpose, since the purpose is clear from the outset and the challenge is rather to operationalise it.

[235] My understanding of ideology here is a set of pre-conceived ideas that are shared by a social group, in this case the ideas shared by place brand managers about how places should be branded. In my approach, I encourage participants to question and critique their interpretations in order to explore the possibility of alternative arrangements that might at the onset be considered contrary or opposed to pre-established ideologies, but that, in light of the discussion, might offer opportunities to change and enhance place branding practice. For a review of principles for the conduct of action research and the concept of ideology in action research, see Winter (1996, pp. 12-20). There are also limitations linked to participants' backgrounds and the politics of place branding. The members of political groups are unlikely to provide completely unbiased information in front of members potentially opposed to their political views, therefore, it is important to be aware of and understand the philosophical and normative context in which participants developed and accounted for their experiences (Babbie 2013, p. 324).

and emphasises the flexibility of design that can be modified as the process of inquiry unfolds, in which participant's answers guide the next set of questions (2013, p. 334).

The basic design of the research included a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews and a series of focus groups interventions, as well as my own observations to assist triangulation of data and enhance internal and external validity, as well as reliability of analysis. The fieldwork was therefore divided into six major stages responding to major timeframes:

Date	**Method**	**Duration**	**Num. of participants**	**Location**	**Description**
August 2014 – January 2016	In-depth interviews	45-90 min	17[236]	Launceston, Hobart and online	Participants were asked a series of questions about their experiences and involvement in putting Tasmania on the map.
20/11/15	Focus Group 1 – State of the art	120 min	5	Launceston	Participants were asked to share their experiences in a group setup, reflecting on the different approaches and issues encountered. I facilitated a discussion on the different approaches taken by the participants to putting Tasmania on the map. Participants discussed particular actions, interests or contextual factors that influenced or justified the approaches taken.
5/02/16	Focus Group 2 – Introducing the participant-governed model	120 min	4	Launceston	I pre-distributed a two-page document outlining a 'participant-governed network model' for putting Tasmania on the map, which the group considered and discussed during the intervention. The discussion also included possible solutions or suggestions for collaborative action.
1/05/16	Focus Group 2 – Introducing the participant-governed model	120 min	3	Hobart	I pre-distributed a two-page document outlining a 'participant-governed network model' for putting Tasmania on the map, which the group considered and discussed during the intervention. The discussion also included possible solutions or suggestions for collaborative action.
1-3/05/16	Post FG in-depth interviews – reflections on model	45-60 min	3	Hobart	Participants that were not able to attend the focus group intervention agreed to be interviewed to gather their thoughts on the model.[237]
16/06/16	Focus Group 3 – Tasmanian Leaders Program	120 min	8	Launceston	An extra cohort of 8 participants was recruited for an intervention, aiming at both triangulating the data and achieving a minimum sample of 7 (total of 8 participants). Two participants had previously attended the in-depth interview phase and were able to join this session, but the rest attended only the last focus group discussion.

Table 2. Fieldwork Main Stages (Author's own).

[236] Fifteen participants originally selected, plus an additional two (due to original participants not being available).
[237] In addition to a fourth focus group, three participants from the southern cohort agreed to be interviewed a second time to discuss the participant-governed model that I presented in in-depth semi-structured interviews.

The outlined schedule above mirrors Touraine's proposed schedule for the SI method. The aim of SI is to analyse the history of the group and their struggles in creating meaning, in a setup where both researcher and participants generate and acquire knowledge, and translate it into collective action (Touraine 1981, pp. 144-5). This is further detailed in Table 4:

STAGES OF THE GROUP	**OBJECTIVE**	**CASE STUDY**
Witness group	Participants share their past experiences and create collective identities	Participants share their experiences in *putting Tasmania on the Map* through a series of in-depth interview and focus groups discussions
Confrontation group	The group is inspired to self-analyse from the historical account of experiences (from image group to analysis group)	Participants reflected on their experiences and self-analysed their strategies and actions in light of the new knowledge learnt from other participants in the second part of the first focus group discussion.
Flexion → Conversion	The group focuses on the way forward, leaving the past behind. It requires the development of a vision followed by action.	Participants focused on a way forward by reflecting on a model of participant-governed policy networks as alternative governance arrangements to develop a common vision. An account of issues and opportunities followed[238]
Conversion → Permanent sociology	A long-lasting relationship between action and analysis is established	Although this could not be tested in a further focus group discussion, in practice this would be the goal of such interventions, and responds to the dynamic nature of places and. Participatory approaches need long-lasting relationships and continuous reflections and analysis to adapt to the ever-changing nature of places

Table 3. The Sociological Intervention Method and its Adaptation to the Case Study. Adapted from Touraine (1981).[239]

[238] Interventions do not always lead to projects, often they just develop insights and fruitful discussions to move forward. See, for instance, North (1998) and Gundelach (2005).

[239] The method of SI is normally used in isolation and during a lengthy process. Due to the constraints of this dissertation, the method is combined with in-depth interviews to enrich the data and triangulate results, and due to the impossibility to repeat the interventions more than two times (monetary and time constraints). Touraine (1978) envisaged the process as a series of 6-8 interventions lasting a few years. Recent studies last between six and eight meetings. The present study had a maximum of four meetings. However, since the number of participants was lower, the Researcher had an opportunity to deepen the analysis and reflections on the construction of collective place identities.

As noted above, primary data for this study was collected via face-to-face in-depth interviews and focus groups. The format of the interviews and discussions are detailed in the next sections.

5.6.1 In-depth semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviewing design is flexible, iterative and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone.

(Rubin & Rubin R 1995, p.43 in Babbie 2013, p.326)

In-depth interviews, coupled with researcher's personal observations, are a useful technique to learn about the experiences of particular individuals or groups, particularly before an intervention. The choice of semi-structured interview proper is more appropriate for PAR, since this type of interviews are more *flexible* than other methods such as questionnaires (Chevalier & Buckles 2013).

In this thesis, following Babbie's definition, I define qualitative interview as 'an interaction between interviewer and respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry including the topics to be covered, but not a set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order' (2013, p.327). Interviews in this study were conducted as conversations, where I adopted the role of 'socially acceptable incompetent', limited to providing general direction and ensuring that certain topics were covered. (Lofland et al 2006, p. 69-70 in Babbie 2013, p. 329). Thus, I strove to collect the most basic and obvious aspects of the situation. 'A naturalistic investigator, almost by definition, is one who does not understand. She or he is "ignorant" and needs to be "taught". This role of watcher and asker of questions is the quintessential *student* role' (Lofland et al 2006. p. 69 in Babbie 2013, p. 329). The interviews centred around participants' strategies for *putting places on the map* and their interactions with other stakeholders involved in such process. See Appendix Five (p.251) for a sample of the interview questionnaire .[240]

[240] The questions included: what is the aim/motivations, who is consulted, who decides on the strategies to take to action, how are those strategies received by other stakeholders, what are the outcomes of such strategies (successful or not successful), frameworks for benchmarking or reporting on success and what is the problematic around strategising and coordinating among stakeholders often presenting contested views. To facilitate attendance, the maximum time estimated for the interviews and focus group sessions was set at 120 min. At the end of each meeting there was an opportunity for participants to debrief and/or express any concerns they had to the Researcher.

5.6.2 Focus Group discussions and intervention

The production of a collective identity is an ongoing process which enables the group to recognise and define itself as such, and which also facilitates mobilization in the public sphere as a cohesive unit with agreed aims and interests.

(Munday 2006, p. 91)

Focus groups have a long tradition in both academia and market research (Morgan 1998). The method has been adapted to suit the research's requirements (Kitzinger & Barbour 1999), and focuses on the process of interaction as opposed to just gathering content (Wilkinson 1999). The FG method is also known as group interviewing and it allows the researcher to question several individuals simultaneously (Bloor et al 2001).[241]

This flexible method is particularly useful for the observation of the ongoing *process* of developing and management of collective identities (Munday 2006).[242] In line with Bloor et al (2001), I argue that focus groups encourage democratic participation, serve as a medium for authentic representation of collective viewpoints, can challenge experts' opinion and are a space for active formation of views and a point for transformative collective action. In this study, focus groups represent a means of co-participation in social science, political, and market research, conferring participants the role of local experts and extended peer reviewers, contrary to the traditional use of focus groups in commercial market research, where subjects are passive in the process of creation of knowledge (Babbie 2013, p. 329).[243]

The data collected represents the group's reactions to stimuli and the meanings and narratives, processes and normative context of such groups:

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[241] In fact, the market research application of focus groups gave ground to academic research practice that presented new analytic techniques based on the systematic analysis of audio transcripts. The research method of focus group originated in the work of the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University in the 1940s. Two of its investigators, Merton and Kendall, dissatisfied with only being able to quantify positive and negative responses in commercial market research, developed an interviewing procedure for the groups to help the researchers describe the subjective reactions of the members of such groups. As a result, they presented a standardised set of procedures in an article for the *American Journal of Sociology* named 'The focused interview' in 1946. Academic researchers since started to become interested and to *adapt* the commercial focus group practice to academic research needs, using them to assess groups' reactions to stimuli. The socially legitimated situation of the focus groups stimulates collective members to articulate normative assumptions, and participants engage in 'retrospective introspection' to tease out taken for granted assumptions. The focus group method can include structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews (Bloor et al 2001).

[242] See also Bryman (2001) on how focus groups help study collective meanings in a particular phenomenon.

[243] Although Munday employs focus groups to study social movements from a sociological perspective, parallels can be drawn between the creation of collective identities in social movements and for places, particularly the dynamism of both processes. Munday (2006) also reflects on the lack of consensus on the definition of identity in social movement theory, which resonates with the elusive concept of place identity as detailed in Chapter Two.

> In late-modern societies subject to a widening range of influences, focus groups proved a valuable resource for documenting the complex and varying processes through which norms and meanings are shaped, elaborated and applied. […] focus groups are not just the time-pressed researcher's poor substitute for ethnographic fieldwork, they are the mainstream method to address those study topics in increasingly privatised societies which are less open to observational methods (Bloor et al 2001, p. 17).

Among the advantages of focus groups are their flexibility, high face validity, low cost, and relatively fast data collection (Krueger 1994). This method allows researchers to capture real-life data from a particular social environment, however, researchers require special skills to control the dynamics to establish a conducive environment (Krueger 1994). Finally, although the groups proved difficult to assemble, I was able to adjust the recruitment to ensure a valid and representative sample through the fieldwork stage (see section on recruitment).

The focus group discussions were carefully facilitated to generate comparable data. Although they were mostly fluid and not controlled by me, they retained their own internal hierarchies as explored in Chapter Six. Furthermore, I ensured the fluidity of such groups by regularly accessing the support and expertise of peers.[244]

5.7 Sample

Using a purposive sampling approach (Barbour 2007), participants were selected based on their involvement in branding Tasmania. Participants were specifically asked to reflect on *putting Tasmania on the map* as opposed to *place branding* to avoid confusing the process with the method, and narrowing options in advance of discussion.[245] Participants were then invited to reflect on an alternative, networked model for *putting places on the map.*

The participants were chosen because they had been formally or informally involved in branding Tasmania. They all have contributed to creating the collective identity of Tasmania from a holistic multi-stakeholder perspective based co-creation of meaning, and communicate the brand identity values that affecting the place's image (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013).[246] Participants were requested to participate in their personal capacity, not as representative of their respective organizations.

[244] Since individual differences often lead to conflict, it was particularly relevant to manage the potential for conflict. Similarly, I was mindful of the possibility of participants demanding the right to set research priorities, debate findings and implications, and regulate the conduct of research as a consequence of their participation, particularly those in traditional positions of authority (Bloor et al 2001).
[245] Refer to Chapter Two, pp. 31-34 for a review of the lack of clear terminology in place branding.
[246] The aim was to map out activities and interactions covering the phases of decision-making, strategising and implementation of place branding strategies.

5.7.1 Sampling method

Purposive sampling is employed to identify information rich participants and results in a group that is not representative of the general population, but instead has a specific characteristic in common (Babbie 2013, p. 200).[247] Participants were identified based on a literature review and from my knowledge and experience as a practitioner to represent the main stakeholder groups involved in place branding processes, namely: government, business industry, tourism industry, creative arts industry, education industry, non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations, private industry and civil society (residents). See Appendix Two (p. 241) for a detailed overview of participant's backgrounds.

The cohort consisted of individuals that have been formally or informally involved in decision-making and strategising processes aimed at putting Tasmania on the map. Both men and women were included and the study did not sample specifically for ethnicity, family type, sexuality, income or employment, since it does not aim to establish correlations between socio-demographic characteristics and the different roles and approaches taken. The study sought to secure as representative a sample as possible and avoided including more than one participant from an organisation, except for the last focus group discussion.[248] Due to the existing interactions in place branding practices and the limited size of the region under study, often participants invited to the discussion already knew each other and had also already interacted in branding Tasmania. In addition, due to my background as a practitioner in the area of place branding, some of the interviewees (government officials, tourism industry officials and marketers) had previously known me or the organisation(s) I worked for in this area.

5.7.2 Sampling size

The optimum size of a focus group depends on its purpose, the topic of discussion, and the characteristics of the participants (Barbour 2007; Munday 2006).[249] Burnard et al (2008) argue that the optimum size for a focus group is 6-8 participants (excluding researchers), but suggest a workable range of 3-14 participants.[250] Krueger and Casey (2000) advocate for mini-groups with

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[247] See, also, Barbour (2007) and Yin (2003). A review of Touraine's SI method and Melucci's adaptation of SI revealed the existing debate in terms of selecting formally established pre-existing groups or complete foreigners (Munday 2006). Since there in existing group that unites all stakeholders in collaborative place branding practices, the Researcher decided to select participants not from a formally established group, but representative of the stakeholder groups involved in place branding.

[248] See in sampling section on the Tasmanian Leaders Program.

[249] Carlsen and Glenton (2011) reviewed 220 papers published in 117 journals reporting on focus groups and found that only 37 provided a justification for their group size, with pragmatic approaches to focus group size justification being the most frequent.

[250] See also Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) and Stewart and Shamdasani (1990). Burnard et al (2008) advise on a strategy of over-recruiting – and potentially managing a rather larger than optimal group – rather than under-recruiting, to avoid having to cancel a session or having an unsatisfactory discussion.

four to six participants, which although potentially criticised for lacking points of view, are easier to moderate and allow participants enough space to express their opinions.[251]

Following recommendations on SI groups (Dubet & Wieviorka 1996), the study aimed at interviewing one cohort of 12-15 participants, with the aim of having a minimum of 7 participants in each focus group intervention, representing a variety of stakeholder groups (Babbie 2013).[252] This size would ensure that focus groups run smoothly and that every participant is able to interact and engage in a constructive discussion, as well as ensuring a minimum of attendants. Thus, an initial cohort of 15 participants were invited to share and discuss how they went about *putting Tasmania on the map*. As explained in the next section, I encountered some scheduling difficulties out of my control that resulted in smaller than expected focus group samples. I then resolved to expand the sample and to include an additional focus group intervention with the members of an already existing group, the Tasmanian Leaders Program, as discussed below.

5.7.3 Recruitment

> *The researchers expect similar motivations for the participants to those of the people participating in Touraine's research project, who did it mainly because they expected to obtain knowledge and understand their actions to act more effectively.*
>
> *(Dubet & Wieviorka 1996, p. 57)*

To ensure a representative sample of appropriate participants I contacted a known network of potential participants based on my experience (Dattalo 2008). An initial set of participants was contacted via existing directories to be invited to participate in this research project. At the point of contact, participants were requested to also inform other potential participants about the study. Additional potential candidates were invited to contact me to express their interest. This approach operationalises the snowball sampling technique (Dattalo 2008) without breaching the personal privacy of individuals under the Tasmanian Personal Information Protection Act (2004).[253] When participants expressed interest in participating in the research project, information packs were distributed electronically and reviewed at the first meeting where the involvement of the participant was confirmed, the consent form signed, and the first in-depth interview undertaken. A total of 18 participants were successfully recruited and interviewed.

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[251] Bloor et al (2001) also note that small groups run the risk of limited discussion, while large groups can be chaotic, hard to manage for the facilitator and frustrating for participants who feel they get insufficient opportunities to speak. Barbour (2007) suggests 10-15 participants. The section of sampling outlines the lack of specific framework for sampling in case study research. Reflecting on this debate, Munday (2006) concludes that the group size needs to respond to the particularities of the project.

[252] In a focus group, typically 5 to 15 people meet in a suitable and comfortable environment to engage in guided discussions around one or several topics under study (Babbie 2013, p. 329). The participants are selected on the basis of relevance to the topic under study (Babbie, p. 330; see also Barbour 2007 on purposive sampling for focus groups).

[253] To access the complete legislation, visit <http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au>.

The second phase of the case study aimed at holding a series of focus groups discussions. However, despite participants' initial commitment, they experienced some constraints, such as work commitments, illness or other events preventing them from travelling (5+ hours return drive to attend sessions in the north or south) which impacted the logistics of bringing together participants from different parts of the state.[254] To facilitate attendance and minimise the impact on their work schedules and personal time, the research sample was divided in two sub-groups, corresponding to participants from the north and south of the state of Tasmania.[255] Despite my efforts to accommodate participants' constraints, other issues beyond my control, such as participants' unavailability, work and personal commitments, and illness still impacted the sample size at both locations.[256]

In light of the small size of both focus groups, I decided to include an additional focus group in the research design. This time, to facilitate attendance, I targeted members of an already existing group arguing, in line with Patton, that more than one purposive (*purposeful*) sampling procedure is acceptable in qualitative research (2002, p. 242).

The planning of the last focus groups required a change to the recruitment mode and an amendment of the ethics application.[257] Whereas I initially obtained participants utilising a snowballed purposive sampling approach, in this case I had the opportunity to access a wider database comprised of existing alumni of the Tasmanian Leaders Program (TLP) that had been engaged in discussions on Tasmania's development (including branding as a tool for economic development) and invited them to an additional focus group discussion.[258] Accessing a cohort of engaged leaders and critical thinkers that already meet on a regular basis assisted me in achieving a new cohort of participants. The alumni of the TLP possess cross-industry skills and backgrounds relevant to this project, since they have been and are engaged in many ways and capacities in branding Tasmania. In addition, potential TLP participants were asked to snowball the sample to acquaintances that might be interested in participating, particularly focusing on incorporating members of civil society with indirect engagement in place branding practices.[259]

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[254] Constraints include, but are not limited to, sickness, lack of time or availability due to work or family commitments, and so forth.

[255] The sample revealed a 50% split in their location. See Appendix One for more details on participant's origins.

[256] The first focus group in the north had a total of 5 participants, and the second focus group (had a total of 4 participants (from the original 5). Refer to Table 2 'Fieldwork Main Stages', on p. 119 for more details. Due to the impossibility to host two consecutive focus group discussions, one focus group combining the two sessions (state-of-the-art and introduction and discussion on the participant-governed model) was held in Hobart, with 3 of the participants. The information gathered from the south of the state was complemented by 3 additional in-depth interviews with participants unable to assist to the discussions, to present and gather their insights on the alternative model.

[257] Small amendment of the original ethics application H14214.

[258] See <http://www.tasmanianleaders.org.au/>.

[259] The changes to recruitment also included that potential participants were contacted on behalf of the investigator by the Project Officer of TLP to be invited to attend the Focus Group intervention. Thus, both the Project Officer of TLP

An extra 6 participants were recruited from the TLP, and two participants from the previous sample (that attended in-depth interviews) were able to join the group. The total number of participants of the fourth and last focus group discussion was eight.

The final aggregated sample consisted in a total of 24 participants, all adults (18+) of varying age groups, coming from and reflecting the variety of the different groups of stakeholders. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the stakeholder groups were identified following a review of the literature on place branding and place management (see, for instance, De Nisco et al 2008; Garcia et al 2012; Morgan et al 2003), as well as a background analysis of stakeholders involved in branding Tasmania. See appendices One and Two for more details on the sample breakdown (p. 239, 241).

5.8 The approach to data analysis

> *Data analysis is a systematic search for meaning. It is a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others. Analysis means organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories. It often involves synthesis, evaluation, interpretation, categorization, hypothesizing, comparison, and pattern finding. It always involves what Wolcott calls "mindwork". . . Researchers always engage their own intellectual capacities to make sense of qualitative data.*
>
> *(Hatch 2002, p. 148 in Leech & Onwuegbuzie 2007, p.564)*

The choice of qualitative research in this thesis responds to the need for a more contextual and holistic understanding of the place branding process. This case study aims at understanding the context and issues intrinsic to the interactions between stakeholders in place branding processes (Stake 2005) to better understand the construct of 'participatory place branding'. For that purpose, 'meaning has to be understood within the social context' (Saussure 1974).

In this sense, qualitative research is process-oriented and can inform theory and model development (Leech & Onwuegbuzie 2007, p.559) gathered from insights into the practices undertaken in a particular context or setting. Hence, constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss 2017) was employed to interpret the data in search of a rich account of the 'challenges encountered in implementing interventions designed to change and reform existing [place branding] practice' (Nastasi & Schensul 2005, p. 186). The focus is on a consistent interpretation

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and the researcher coordinated RSVPs and attendance to the focus group by participants. The Researcher forwarded an amended information sheet to potential participants that expressed interest in attending the focus group. Once all the details about the research project, including issues around confidentiality and possibilities for re-identification had been appropriately explained and participants had an opportunity to ask any further questions, they were asked to read and sign the consent form prior to their participation in the focus group intervention.

of the contextual and cultural factors that enhance or limit the efficacy of strategies and interventions in place branding processes.

Through the analysis of participants' discourses I aimed to uncover their systematic relations and patterns of interaction (Cresswell 2007; Denzin & Lincoln 2005). Consequently, in the analysis I strove to interpret the place branding process from the meanings embedded in participants' observations (Denzil & Lincoln 2005). For that purpose, I employed constant comparison analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994; Glaser and Strauss 1967) based on a mix of deductive and inductive coding derived from specific theoretical interests and recurrent issues in the literature. Therefore, to a series of previously identified codes underpinning the research question and informed by the theoretical framework outlined in the first part of this thesis (literature review), I added a set of emerging themes, based on the most salient constructs, issues and concerns identified in the data. From the evidence, I developed a series of propositions that are reflected in the claims set out in the discussion chapter (Chapter Seven). Finally, through the analysis and the discussion of the results I reflected on my research observations and personal notes recorded during the interviews and focus group discussions.

The most salient constructs were developed into a matrix formed by a set of codes. Those codes guided the thematic organisation of the text from the transcripts. The analysis is divided in two parts. The first part is focused on the common themes through the interview phase, and the second part on the themes arising from the focus group discussions as part of the sociological intervention. The aim of this distinction was to observe the changes in the nature of interactions form isolated interviews to collaborative reflective processes that occurs in the method of sociological intervention. Through this method, participants reflected on their experiences and discussed potential avenues for collaboration for the common good. The analysis is supported by contextual quotes and excerpts from the in-depth interviews and focus groups. Subsequently, the discussion in Chapter Seven connects the theoretical review with the themes identified in the results section and proposes grounded explanations (Attride-Stirling 2001; Yin 2003).

The selection of themes identified a mix of common themes that offer generalisations and thus explanatory value, and individual discourses and narratives that highlighted group differences. Since the thesis aims at exploring the process of place branding, it makes sense to reflect on all these levels and forms of interaction. The result is a mix of commonalities, differences and contradictions analsyed in the discussion section in relation to the research questions (Attride-Stirling 2001).

Lastly, the findings are presented in the data analysis section following the stages of the exploration (in-depth individual, focus groups interviews and interventions), and subsequently reflecting on the research questions in the discussion. The description and exploration of the place branding network and stakeholder interactions is supplemented by the exploration of rival explanations (Yin 2003) to reinforce and legitimate the findings and validity of results.[260]

5.9 Validity

Although participants were involved in focus groups discussions around strategising and problem-solving about place branding on a quasi-real scenario, they were only engaging in a hypothetical exercise, and not committing to taking further action. The problem of how to distinguish research and action is addressed in this research by clearly organising the interaction between both to ensure that valid knowledge is obtained. Contrary to what happens in action research, in traditional research processes, the researcher is generally not involved. Action research, however, represents a break with those conventional models for obtaining valid knowledge, and the only way is to issue challenges and to be able to tackle them. In order to ensure validity in action research, Karlsen (1991) suggests the following three techniques: pragmatic validation, consensus validation and reflection. Table 5 below further explains the techniques and their application in this research with specific actions to ensure validity: [261]

[260] Rival explanations are useful in case study evaluations as alternative counter-scenarios to validate the data collected, accounting for alternative explanations or 'influences' (Yin 2003, p. 113). Rival explanations are used as a pattern matching technique and are supported by organisational logic analysis of patterns (linear-analytic) following the research stages.

[261] For more details on case study research, see Yin (2003).

Technique	Explanation	Application in this research
Pragmatic validation or spiral design	The researcher collects and analyses data to help people understand the context of the situation they are dealing with and to help them formulate solutions. Implementation of those solutions or actions will lead to new requirements for analysis and the recirculation of data and hypotheses provides control that is scientifically satisfactory and makes useful contributions to the action process. The spiral design of action uses common methods and reflection to combine the two processes.	In-depth interview phase provided data on current practices of place branding in Tasmania and identified potential issues. Reflection on the data provided through focus group discussions helped identify requirements for solutions. The presentation of the additional model allowed participants to discuss a potential alternative for collaboration in place branding. Through triangulation of data from interviews and focus groups, as well as my observations, the study makes *analytic generalisations* (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011) supported by both method and data triangulation. See also Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) for further discussion on *pragmatic validity*.
Consensus validation	When the spiral design proves difficult (no clear connection between data, relationships and actions), results can also be corroborated by inviting practitioners to take part in evaluation, interpreting and reflecting on the data generated through the research process. This is an essential part of the design process since it concerns not only the actions of the process but also evaluation and interpretation connected with the research and tested by action. The type of data and assumptions used as basis in 'real-life changes' are not only those that have resulted from observable and controlled processes.	My experience as practitioner was key in evaluating and reflecting on the data generated, establishing the links and lack of interaction between theory of place branding and practice. In addition, participants reflected on their practices in a group context during the focus groups, providing their insights and reflections on the interpretation of data. By observing discursive interactions, I was able to reflect on power relationships that informed data (for example, government officials being reluctant to lose their position of authority in collaborative settings). This is understood by Hesse-Biber & Leavy as *communicative validity*, or opening to discussion the findings with both participants and the scholarly community (2011, p. 49).
Reflection	Properly planned research ensures that regular contact with other experienced research workers, often acting as 'devil's advocates' is maintained. It refrains the researcher from getting trapped in a situation or a role and offers adequate perspectives to what is happening. This research will implement ready-established structures consisting of weekly meetings with the researcher supervisor and sharing of the analysis of findings with several colleagues in the Faculty throughout the process.	I maintained regular meetings with the supervisory team to monitor the developments of research analysis and findings, as well as regularly consulting other researchers, including colleagues outside of the university. In addition, two participants reviewed the data analysis and provided critical feedback validating the interpretations presented in the study.

Table 4. Validation Techniques and Application to this Research Design (own elaboration from Karlsen 1991).

The dialogue arising from the focus groups aims to describe problems and analyses them in the focus (Argyris 1985 in Karlsen 1991).[262] However, in the focus group set up, and similarly in the decision-making process, all interest groups typically endeavour to express their views but to also compromise towards a common denominator (Karlsen 1991). The 'politics' or action research needs to be observed (Herr & Anderson 2005), since often more radical solutions are not considered for the purposes of reaching consensus.

5.10 Ethical issues

During the fieldwork stage I collected and analysed data from interviews and focus groups. Individual information of participants, such as names, organisations and positions were coded to protect participants' confidentiality. Subject to participants' permission, the interviews and focus groups discussions were audio recorded. Once recordings had been transcribed, and information was clarified to the satisfaction of participants, all recordings were permanently erased. Although I was committed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants, the case study recognises that the scope of its research sample could lead to re-identification of participants. Information sheets explicitly alerted participant candidates that the study could not fully guarantee their anonymity (see Appendix Three for a sample of the information sheet).

Similarly, although confidentiality of the focus group discussions could not be guaranteed, all participants agreed to adopt Chatham House Rule and therefore to keep the information and comments on the discussions confidential and within the group. The Chatham House Rule states that 'When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed'.[263]

Participants' identities were therefore protected by the use of codes when quoting data form the interview and focus groups data and in the aggregated data tables and analysis. The research design was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee Network of Tasmania under the reference number H14214.

5.11 Limitations and bias

Arguably, research is always subjective, and I acknowledge that the research paradigm presented here reflects my own values and beliefs as an investigator. Furthermore, although there are inherent limitations arising from the use of single case studies, they can help develop and test the

[262] However, Karlsen believes that 'part of the action researcher's role is to formulate radical alternatives, especially if no one else does' (1991, p. 153).
[263] See <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about/chatham-house-rule#sthash.ANS7U4Ft.dpuf>.

feasibility of methods to be employed in subsequent studies (Babbie 2013, p. 94). Doctoral research also occurs within limited time and resource constraints. In this case, the case study could not be replicated within this thesis. However, the aim is to describe the methodology in detail so it can be replicated in further studies, validating its applicability in other territories. Similarly, the aim of this dissertation is to reveal the insights into how social and political interactions occur in the process of place branding, in order to inform further research, not only to describe such attitudes. Despite the limited resources, as well as the above-mentioned issues around participation and scheduling, I was able to make adjustments to ensure the feasibility and validity of this research project. The representativeness of the sample, despite budget constraints, was ensured by an appropriate length of the sample and the triangulation of data.[264]

I was particularly careful with ensuring triangulation of methods and data (Yin 2003), as well that of the backgrounds of participants representing all stakeholder groups involved in branding Tasmania, and representative of other territories as well. I understand that 'all knowledge is affected by the social conditions under which it is produced; it is grounded in both the social location and the social biography of the observer and the observed' (Mann & Kelley 1997, p. 392). Consequently, although I acknowledge my particular perspective based on my own experience, I ensured self-reflexivity through a critical review of my practice and claims with the research team.

5.12 Conclusion

This case study presents participatory action research as a means to further develop practice. The case study assists the understanding of the underlying relationships and interactions among stakeholders in place branding practices. Furthermore, the case study explores the possibility of an alternative model of governance for place branding in a quasi-real regional scenario, in an experiment aimed at further reflecting on operationalising participatory place branding practices.[265] The next section provides the particular context and background to the case study.

[264] Hesse-Biber & Leavy argue that qualitative sampling consists of in-depth understanding of small samples (2011).
[265] Participation of residents in regional place branding was analysed through surveys by Martin and Capelli (2017).

BACKGROUND TO THE CASE: TASMANIA

6.1 Introduction

That's Tasmania, the island down the bottom that's sometimes left off the map, the one we joke about giving to New Zealand but the Kiwis don't want it because they play odd football, the one that you reach by time travel going back half a century, Australia's perennial basket case, the place that shouldn't really be a state at all with its 12 often-troublesome senators for a population smaller than the Gold Coast's.

(Pascoe 2016)[266]

The aim of this chapter is to outline the background to the case study of this dissertation. This chapter provides an account of the socio-economic and historical background and characteristics of the Australian island state of Tasmania, establishing the context for the case study. It also provides a review of formal and informal branding attempts to brand Tasmania, and includes contested branding and media accounts, as well as community governance initiatives influencing Tasmania's place brand. The chapter argues that Tasmania's history and culture have been effected by its colonial origins. Despite recent developments to support tourism and revive the economy, its society is still perceived as fractured, polarised and parochial. Despite its natural assets and tourism potential, the laid-back living style, slow pace, accessibility and friendliness of its cities and regions, Tasmania is often portrayed as a poor, welfare-dependent, enterprise-free society and, partly due to its past as a government-subsidised prison society and perception that its society is flawed, in need of being rescued (Croome 2015). As detailed below, for governments and industry bodies, place branding seems to be the panacea for curing what was formally called 'Van Diemen's Land ills'.

In the first part of this chapter, a series of sections describe the geography, history, politics and economics of Tasmania to illustrate how the island's identity is historically marked and currently being reimagined in light of economic and social issues and developments. The description of the setting is followed in the second part of the chapter by an account of formal public, private and civil society branding attempts outlining the branding organisations, their agendas and strategies, and an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. The chapter concludes with a review of informal branding efforts affecting Tasmania's image and reputation, including branding by private organisations, media and political movements, such as the environmental movement. In particular, the chapter outlines public, private and civil society place brand interactions to argue that Tasmania's public branding for economic development results in a narrow understanding and commodification of the state's identity. In fact, its complex identity results in a multiplicity

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266 The Gold Coast is a tourist region situated in Australia's state of Queensland, known for its beaches and laid-back lifestyle. For more information on the Gold Coast and other states in Australia, see the official Tourism Australia website <http://www.australia.com/en/places/gold-coast.html>.

of brand images, including those enhanced by the private sector and civil society, projecting a myriad of contested brand messages to the minds of potential place consumers. The analysis includes a literature review and is supported by contextual quotes and excerpts from the in-depth interviews and focus groups. To maintain the confidentiality of participants, their names have been coded into numbers, and their interventions are contextualised by specifying when they were recorded: namely, whether their comments occurred during the interviews or the different focus group discussions.

6.2 Geography

Tasmania is the furthest south and only island state of Australia located south of the state of Victoria. It is the smallest state of Australia and its capital is Hobart. The territory covers a geographical area of over 68,000 km^2, similar to the country of Ireland, and is located 240 kilometres south of the Australian continent.[267] The territory is surrounded by the Indian and Pacific Oceans and separated from the mainland by Bass Strait.[268]

Travel across Bass Strait is mainly done by plane (Hobart and Launceston airports), or the *Spirit of Tasmania* a ferry based in the northern city of Devonport.[269] The map below illustrates territory and access to the island:

[267] See, Australian Bureau of Statistics <http://www.abs.gov.au/>. The state includes the main island and the 334 surrounding islands. Other known islands in Tasmania: Bruny Island, nestling close to the south-eastern coast of the main island; King and Flinders islands in Bass Strait and subantarctic Macquarie Island, about 1,450 km to the southeast. The main island has a maximum length and width of about 320 km. For more details, see http://www.britannica.com/place/Tasmania.

[268] The stretch of water between the mainland and Tasmania, 350km wide and 500km long, was named after George Bass, who described the stretch as a channel linking the Pacific and Southern oceans (Blainey 1983).

[269] Access to the island is crucial for the economy of Tasmania. Episodes like the collapse of Ansett Airlines in 2001 brought serious transport crisis to the territory (Herr 2002a). See, also <www.spiritoftasmania.com.au>. The Bass Strait hosts the highly controversial Basslink, an electrical cable in service since 2006 that carries up to 630 megawatts of power across the strait in both directions (McCall 1997, p. 301). The strait also hosts a gas pipeline.

Figure 12. Base image by TASMAP (www.tasmap.tas.gov.au) © State of Tasmania

Tasmania's geography is known for the variety of its landscapes and its pristine wilderness, as well as its numerous national parks showcasing wildlife, climate and cultural diversity.[270] Its rich and contested history of indigenous and early settlement is complemented by a vibrant cultural scene consisting of heritage architecture and sites, museum offerings, and a variety of arts and music festivals. Other events include gastronomic encounters, shows and races.[271]

Tasmania's population, mainly of British descent, is ethnically and culturally homogeneous with around 80% born in the state and around 90% born in Australia (Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2014). These statistics may explain a degree of conservativeness found in the island's population, arguably presenting a strong sense of identity linked to its European settlement as is observed through an account of its history in the next section, and as noted by participants in the study:

> Tasmania is not multicultural, let's just be honest. Yes, it's Anglo-Saxon (participant 7, in-depth interview).
>
> Especially I do not want to hear what you have to say if you don't come in a package that I have in my head of who it should be coming from which is basically white Anglo-Saxon man in a suit who has worked in some quite safe industry or some governmental sector which is actually not engaged with high risk taking, and a lot of those people have done phenomenal things in London, America, Hong Kong, Melbourne or Sydney (participant 20, in-depth interview)

In addition, as Hay (2003, p. 203) notes, the bounded identities of islands often lead to parochialism or conservatism in the political and social realms, hindering dynamism.

6.3 History

The first inhabitants of the land were Tasmanian Aborigines, present in the area for 35,000 years (Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania 2015). The arrival and settlement of the British led to the undeclared war and genocide of the *Palawa* native people.[272] The time of the invasion is known

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[270] McGaurr et al (2015) argue that governments use the listing of natural assets as brand messages of purity and natural qualities. World heritage areas include the 'Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area', Brickendon, Woolmers, Darlington Probation Station, Coal Mines Historic Site and Port Arthur historic site. For a detailed list of each of the state's assets, see <www.discorvertasmania.com.au>; Parks include the iconic Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair, considered the 'Uluru' or 'Ayer's Rock' (most iconic mountain in Australia) of Tasmania, the environmentally contested site of Franklin-Gordon Wild River (that determined the agenda in state and national political campaigns), the Freycinet Peninsula (currently in the eye of conservationists eager to protect the national park against tourism development) and Maria Island (key location on the conservation and recovery program for the endangered Tasmanian Devil). For more information, visit Tasmania's parks and wildlife service website, <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au>; the Tasmanian Devil program website, <http://www.tassiedevil.com.au>; and on the battle over development in the Freycinet area, see: Australian Broadcasting Corporation <http://www.abc.net.au /news/2016-01-17/freycinet-lodge-anger-over-proposed-extension-to-resort/7093934>.

[271] Museums include: the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG), Queen Victory Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG) and the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), among others. Festivals include: Ten Days on the Island, MONA's eclectic MOFO and DARK MOFO, Festival of Voices, and Falls Festival in Marion Bay, among others. Tasmania also sponsors a major Australian Football League (AFL) team, Hawthorn, known locally as Tassie Hawks.

[272] *Palawa* is a generic term used by Tasmanian aboriginal first nations. There were several nations around the state, including the *Leterremairrener* people of Launceston.

as the ‘Black War’ (Clements 2014b). Despite claims at the time that the last aboriginal native Tasmanian had died after the war, there is an active Aboriginal community fighting for recognition of their culture and rights in the territory.[273] Early European settlers included mostly convicts and their guards and were focused on developing agriculture and industry (Reynolds 2012).[274] The territory was first established in 1825 as the independent colony Van Diemen’s Land with its own judiciary and Legislative Council. The colony started to be known as Tasmania since the 1820s and was officially renamed Tasmania with the first sitting of its bicameral parliament in 1856, in an attempt to ‘exorcise the ghosts of convictism’ (Haynes 2006). [275] Tasmania became an Australian state in 1901 after Tasmanians voted in favour of the federation (Reynolds 2012). The territory is also known as the Apple Island (as it has been one of the world’s major producers of the fruit), Holiday Isle and Tassie (Walker 2006).[276]

6.3.1 The Tasmanian Imaginary

Tasmania’s culture and history have been marked by its colonial past, and a history of ‘hostility, exile and brute conquest’ marked the cultural framework in which the territory was understood and represented (Haynes 2006, p. 2). The island was considered as a vast immensity of space and wilderness ‘at the furthest extremity of the world’, despite the existing Aboriginal culture that remained a mystery to early settlers and to the rest of the world (ibid).

During and post settlement, the territory suffered acculturation, leading English novelist Anthony Trollope to declare that ‘[e]verything in Tasmania is more English than is England itself’

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[273] The ‘Black War’ took place between 1824 and 1831 and was characterised by a series of violent events that claimed the lives of over 200 colonists and almost annihilated the island’s remaining Aborigines (Clements 2014a). In addition, Clements argues that the ‘Black Line [was] the largest domestic offensive in Australia’s history’ (ibid, p. 4). Clements criticised the lack of recognition of Aboriginal lives and culture during Tasmania’s Black War, one of the deadliest Australian wars. Apart from the 1,000 aboriginal lives, the loss of cultures and histories was tremendous. The ‘annual per capita death rate two-and-a-half times higher than that of Australians in World War Two’, not only due to the war, but also disease (ibid, p. 2). During that time, the Aboriginal community remained alienated from the Tasmanian society, adding to the tragedies of the loss or extinction of the thylacine or Tasmanian tiger and the island’s struggle to protect the environment (Haynes 2006, p. 4). Although at the time of invasion Truganini was declared to be the last aboriginal in Tasmania. However, stories of violence towards aboriginal communities like Truganini’s, probably the best-known Tasmanian Aboriginal women of the colonial era, are still very much silenced and hidden with shame by nowadays Tasmanians. Truganini was of the *Nuenonne* group, born on Tasmania’s Bruny Island around 1812, just nine years after British settlement was established further north on the mainland, close to what is now the capital of the state, Hobart. She was placed under the custody of the conciliator tasked with capturing all living Tasmanian Aborigines and spent the rest of her life imprisoned. She experienced and witnessed violence, rape and brutalities on her people during the period known as the ‘Black War’. Tasmanian Aboriginals, the *Palawa* people, fought a long 100 years to recover Truganini’s remains in order to conduct a proper burial, according to the aboriginal traditions. See <http://australianmuseum.net.au/truganini-1812-1876#sthash.MatbLgcR.dpuf>.

[274] For more information, see Reynolds (2012).

[275] Upon its discovery by Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, the territory was named Van Diemen’s Land in honour of Anthony Van Diemen, Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. English convicts and settlers associated the name with sinister suggestions. The state is currently named after Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, the first reported European to see the island in the seventeenth century (Reynolds 2012, p. 331).

[276] In 1973, coinciding with the opening of Wrest Point Hotel Casino the 'Apple Isle' marketing image lost its attractiveness when Tasmania lost its traditional British apple markets. The 'Holiday Isle' became an image that government and travel industry interests anxiously sought to live up to (Walker 2006).

(Trollope 1873, p. 169). Coincidentally, a sense of fascination with the territories' unique flora and fauna and its old growth forests led to the establishment of the first Royal Society for scientific studies outside Britain: The Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land for Horticulture, Botany and the Advancement of Science (The Royal Society of Tasmania 2017).[277] In fact, Van Diemen's Land was marketing itself in the 1830s as the 'Sanatorium of the South', famous for its flowers, fruits and healthy inhabitants (Haynes 2006, p. 2), harbinger of 'wilderness'. In addition, art flourished in Van Diemen's Land providing natural history and topographical accounts of the pristine landscape, with painters, such as John Glover, one of Australia's greatest colonial landscape artists, showing their appreciation of the land through cultural representations that were often sent to England (Eldershaw 1964).

Contrary to the idyllic vision of artists, the land now declared as a World Heritage area was seen as hostile, violent and treacherous by those trying to penetrate and set up tracks in the riches of its most remote areas searching, among others, for minerals and Huon pine (Haynes 2006).[278]

Just before the economic depression linked to the gold rush in the Australian state of Victoria in the 1850s that attracted Tasmanian migrants, 75% of Tasmania's population were convicts, former convicts or of convict ancestry (Haynes 2006). Consequently, renaming the colony as 'Tasmania' in 1855 did not succeed in 'rebranding the territory'. The imagery associated with the land was deeply rooted in history and culture and 'lingered on as a malaise, as a sense of inferiority to "the mainland"' of Australia (Haynes 2006, p. 5).

There is an unresolved tension between Tasmania's contested history and shame, and the perception of the island as an escape for mainland *urbanites* to the cleanest air, mild climate and gourmet life experiences. Despite the state government's efforts, Tasmanians seem to have not

[277] 'In its early years the Society established the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and a museum which formed the basis of today's Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, both of which institutions it maintains a close association.' For more information, see the Royal Society of Tasmania <http://rst.org.au/about/>.

[278] Historian John West, for instance, described the Macquarie Harbour site (Hobart) as '…sacred to the genius of torture, nature concurred with the objects of its separation from the rest of the world, to exhibit some notion of a perfect misery. There man lost the aspect and heart of a man' (West 1852, p. 181). Similarly, missionary Frederick Mackie wrote about Port Arthur site (colonial prison in the South of the state), 'I could not help contrasting the beauty of the outward scene with the moral wilderness and mental chaos that we knew existed here' reflecting on Port Arthur's reputation as a place of cruelty and oppression (Mackie 1973, p. 41). In fact, the name was changed to Carnarvon in order to lessen its notoriety, but was soon revoked in an attempt to attract tourists to discover its gothic stories and sites (Haynes 2006, p. 4). Port Arthur's significance as a historic convict site was amplified after the 1996 massacre that killed 35 and wounded 23 people. It remains one of the deadliest shootings by a single person in the world, and the incident gave rise to strict control gun laws within Australia by Prime Minister John Howard. The former prison colony has since then been turned into a world heritage tourism attraction and is the third most visited site in Tasmania after Salamanca Market and MONA. For more information, see: http://portarthur.org.au/. The convict presence that made up 58% of the population in 1822 was a huge challenge to settlers, and the situation led to appalling conditions for survival, including cannibalism, leaving atrocious accounts of the life on the island being disseminated by transporters of convicts back to Europe (Haynes 2006, p. 3).

yet come to terms with the history and accept their legacy, so they can move on to a recognition and remembrance stage (Herr 2005, p. 616; 2007, p. 324).[279]

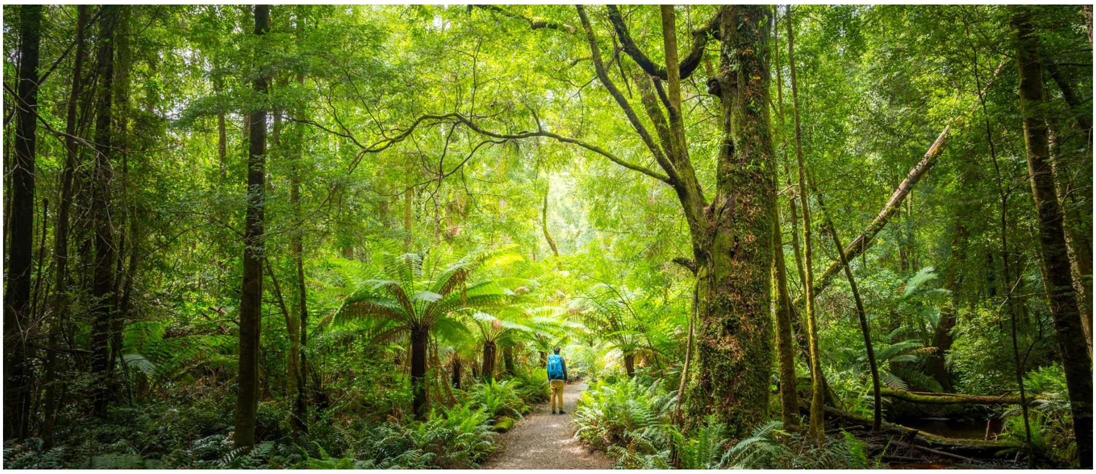

Figure 13. Tourism Tasmania Advertisement sample (www.discovertasmania.com).

Tasmania's islandness has influenced deep divisions in the community, and as a bounded geographical entity shows 'strong perceptions of inland-self and mainland-other' (Stratford 2008, p. 1671).[280]

6.3.2 Unresolved historical issues: North and South divide

> *I think the north is actually a better place than the south. The south is... where the major government agencies are, the resources, the decision-makers. We literally commonly heard the phrase 'home-ground advantage rules', which is there is a southern-centrism or Hobart-centrism to a lot of the vantage in the state because that is where people live.*
>
> *(participant 7, focus group II)*[281]

Since its founding, Tasmanian society has experienced division, conflict and rivalry between the north and the south of the state, based on geology, geography and the resulting economic, demographic and political developments (Hollingsworth 2006). For instance, in the north of the state, a distinct aboriginal group established around the Tamar River suffered enormous economic and environmental impact with the development of Bell Bay (Johnson 2011, p. 15).[282] Furthermore, Launceston and Hobart were first settled in the early 1800s under different

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[279] Establishing a fund of $5,000,000, Tasmania, under Premier Lennon, became the first state in Australia to compensate members of the 'stolen generation', the Aboriginal children forcibly removed from their families (Herr, 2007a, p. 324). In addition, Premier Lennon delivered as promised by late Premier Bacon the return of two Bass Strait islands to Aboriginal ownership: Cape Barren and Clarke Islands (Herr 2005b).

[280] 'Small islands are special because their "geographical precision" facilitates a (unique) sense of place' (Baldacchino, 2005, p. 35 in Stratford 2008, p. 161). Stratford adds that 'in an age of hyper-mobility, islands provide spatial and temporal limits, and foster strong sense of identity' (2008, p. 162).

[281] 'They [North and South] have incredibly diverse problems. The north is political; in the south is really hard to divide Hobart from everything else' (participant 6, focus group III)

[282] The north was the land of the *Leterremairrener Palawa* people.

administrations. The political division started as each colony was separately administered and independent, reporting directly to the Governor based in Sydney (Hollingsworth 2006).[283] When the two administrations amalgamated in 1812, Launceston lost out to Hobart as administrative capital and seat of government, and the British government devoted greater funds to the development of the capital, Hobart, generating concerns of Northern Tasmanians resulting in rivalry (Alexander & Petrow 2006; Hollingsworth 2016).[284] Consequently, the north's developmental economic model relied mostly on private enterprise funding, whilst the south developed as an administrative hub for the state (Hollingsworth 2006) as illustrated by participants' accounts:[285]

> […] people in the north are less likely to want to get grant funding, feel less entitled and are less aware of what money government has and how they distribute it. You just kind of float along in your own kind of environment, thinking I just need to earn my own money, you don't realise that there's money out there (participant 21, in-depth interview).[286]

Since the 1970s, however, governments have tried to address the Hobart-centric perception and issues of north-south divide by providing sporting, transport and university facilities in the North.[287] Furthermore, the Tasmanian Government has recently engaged in a 'Northern Cities Major Development Initiative', and committed $90 million Australian dollars to revitalise northern Tasmania through major interventions in its main northern cities of Launceston, Burnie and Devonport (Tasmanian Government 2016).[288]

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[283] The two territories were divided by the 42nd parallel by the English government, to protect them from a potential French invasion (Hollingsworth 2006).

[284] Since then, the city of Launceston struggled to come to terms with the amalgamation and tried to establish itself as the island's northern hub, thus trying to develop ties up north, around Bass Strait.

[285] This rivalry can be further explained by the different developments of northern and southern economies during the 1870s' mining boom, when the north and north-west benefited from extractions of gold, tin and other metals, that resulted in the expansion of the northern cities of Burnie (nowadays a freight port) and Devonport (*Spirit of Tasmania* ferry terminal. Therefore, the balance of power and population changed and the northern population requested accessibility of facilities outside the capital (Hobart), thus creating tensions between organisations with branches in both halves enterprise (Hollingsworth 2006). On 1 July 1985, TT-Line began operating passenger and vehicle transport across Bass Strait on the Abel Tasman ship. In 1993, the vessel was replaced by the much larger "original" Spirit of Tasmania. The same year, TT-Line separated from the Department of Transport and became a corporation wholly owned by the Tasmanian Government. TT-Line operated at one point three ferries, including one Sydney-Devonport service. The Spirit of Tasmania III, servicing Sydney incurred in major government losses that threatened the solvency of TT-Line, and resulted in the sale of the vessel and closure of the service (Herr 2006b, p.678). Currently the iconic red-and-white Spirit of Tasmania I and II continue to transport passengers, passenger vehicles and freight between Melbourne and Tasmania. For more information, visit <https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/media/ 714352/final-media-kit-february-2016.pdf>.

[286] Today, state services are centralised in Hobart, the capital, and the low cost and convenience of travel to Hobart from other parts of the state complicates the task of providing government services to all sectors of the population. Hobart is also home of the main campus of the only university in Tasmania. The University of Tasmania, based in Hobart, has two additional campuses in the north of the state, in the cities of Launceston and Burnie.

[287] Similarly, the Launceston airport has been redeveloped to act as a gateway for the north of the state. Similarly, transport developments around the cargo and passenger ferry 'Spirit of Tasmania' have led to a revitalisation of services in Devonport, in the north of the state.

[288] In Australian dollars. In addition, the initiative has resulted in the development of a 'Northern Regional Futures Project' to coordinate industry groups' collaboration around the following key industry sectors: food and agribusiness,

They [north and south] have incredibly diverse problems. The north is political; the south is really hard to divide Hobart from everything else (participant 6, focus group III).

There is a political crisis there and it has gradually been getting worse and worse because the natural industry changes, manufacturing closing up (participant 17, focus group III).

Some participants observed the divide as an opportunity to differentiate their offerings, a reason to celebrate or highlight a different identity to be sold to both investors and visitors:

[…] now people are coming from the big city down to Hobart for the same reasons they moved to the big city: for live music, for culture, etc. The way that I look at it is that Launceston can have an identity around entrepreneurship, innovation and technology. And that actually it might be the better choice to stay in Launceston and start a company there than it would be to go to Melbourne or go to Sydney. (participant 9, in-depth interview).

The issues around the political divide will be further explored in Chapter Six and Seven, during data analysis and discussion.

6.4 Politics

If you look at regional centres and scaling back to Tasmania, there is a tendency to expect government to fix people's problems.

(participant 20, in-depth interview)

Tasmania is part of the constitutional monarchy of the Commonwealth of Australia. Australia comprises six States and two Territories (Australian Government 1997). The state's current Premier is Will Hodgman, head of the Tasmanian Liberal Party (TLP). Other major political parties represented in the Legislative Council are the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and The Tasmanian Greens Party (Greens).[289]

Tasmania is divided into twenty-nine local government areas whose revenue is derived from property taxes and state government grants and allocations. Those local governments are typically in charge of urban planning and infrastructure. In a climate of increasing budgetary pressure, efficiency and savings are needed to attend to social issues, bringing about a logical and long debate on local government amalgamation, since twenty-nine councils have a high burden in administrative costs in a population of over half a million, and their particularities in regulation result in added complexities in service provision mechanisms (Alessandrini 2013a, p.

competitive manufacturing and tourism <http://www.northerntasmania.org.au/northern-regional-futures-project> and <http://cg.tas.gov.au/home/major_projects/northern_cities_major_development_initiative>.

[289] There has been ample debate on the composition of the Tasmanian Parliament and the role of minority parties in the composition of governments. The rise of the Greens and their influence on minority governments led to a highly contested parliamentary reform, despite claims by prominent academics that the cuts to parliamentary numbers were unlikely to deliver effective government, or adequate representation or proper parliamentary processes (McCall 1999, p. 293). Electoral quotas were changed in 1998, and led to the reduction in the size of the House of Assembly in 1998, from 12.5% to 16.6% for the twenty-five seat post-1998 Parliament, reducing the Greens representation to a single Member of the House of Assembly (Herr 2003, p. 293).

317).[290] In line with issues on the political divide, additional political issues are considered in the analysis and discussion of findings.

Tasmania's parliament follows the Australian model of two chambers, but differs in the electoral system. While the (lower) House of Assembly is formed using proportional representation, the (upper) Legislative Council is elected by single member electorates. In addition, elections for the houses are held on separate dates. The House of Assembly has twenty-five members, whereas the Legislative Council consists of fifteen single member electorates, elected for six-year terms.[291]

6.5 Economics

And Tasmania is economically, socially and educationally disadvantaged part of Australia and I believe in education, in public education, in particular.

(participant 20, in-depth interview)

Tasmania's geography shaped its migratory history and determined its economic development.[292] The state has the most regional and dispersed population of any state in Australia, with approximately 519,000 in 2016 (ABS 2016), and half of the population living outside the greater capital city area of Hobart.

The state also has the lowest population growth in the nation, an aging population with the nationally poorest levels of health in most indicators, as well as poor educational outcomes (Alessandrini 2010a, p. 670; Eslake 2016a, 2015, pp. 35-46).[293]

Tasmania's current main industries are: agriculture, tourism, fishing and forestry (Eslake 2015, p. 11).[294] Once a main industry, mining is now in significant decline. The island economic

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[290] This idea, along with the view that Tasmania has too many 'councillors', has been supported by economists (notably, Saul Eslake) and business representatives, as well as by the majority of the population.

[291] The five House of Assembly electorates are Denison, Franklin, Bass, Breddan and Lyons (Tasmanian Electoral Commission 2016a). A map of electorates in the Tasmanian Electoral Commission can be viewed here <www.tec.tas.gov.au>. These electorates reflect major divisions and rivalry between different parts of the state (Green 2016). In addition, there are long lines of generational political life, as illustrated by current Liberal Premier Will Hodgman, a 4th generation politician. In Tasmania, the Australian bipartisanism was broken by the rise of the Greens. Despite being a minority party, their numbers allow them to determine which of the other major parties (Labor or Liberal) would form government (Tasmanian Electoral Commission 2016b)

[292] Its Aboriginal tradition was suddenly convulsed in the eighteenth century by the arrival of European maritime expeditions that changed both demography and landscape. As a colony, Tasmania experienced mainly steady growth but suffered from economic fluctuations. For instance, in the late 19th century it was known as a world-center for shipbuilding (Reynolds 2012).

[293] The education system in Tasmania has been under review for the last five years, following concerns of the level of state debts that small rural schools incurred, their viability, and the social implications of their closures, as evidenced in the *Tasmania Tomorrow* restructuring process (Alessandrini 2010a).

[294] The Tasmanian Government (2017) lists as key competitive sectors for the island: advanced manufacturing, Antarctic and Southern Ocean, building and construction, cultural and tourism industry, food and agribusiness, forestry and related industries, information and communication technologies, international education, mining and mineral processing, renewable energy and science research. Forestry, mining and manufacturing sectors are suffering a decline, particularly in the north and north-west of the state (for more information, visit <http://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/home/sectors>). In addition, Profile.id, a web portal that uses Australian Bureau

performance is highly dependent on external factors, such as the distribution of the sales tax, termed Good and Services Tax (GST) in the country, as well as changeable industries such as tourism and agriculture (Bolwell et al 2015, p. 658). [295] The largest source of income is the GST the state receives from federal government, that accounted for 42.3% of the revenue for the 2015-2016 Budget (Bolwell et al 2015, p 660).[296] Tasmania's disadvantage is contextualised in the Australian nation. The Australian economy, however, ranks highly in the world, and Tasmanians enjoy upper middle income conditions.

Food exporting sectors, including seafood, have established a solid brand due to the outstanding quality of their produce (Brand Tasmania 2014a):

> There's a consistent theme here that what works in Tasmania is no longer the old-fashioned bulk production of low-value commodities competing solely on the basis of price but rather products and experiences which do have a unique component to them for which customers will pay premium prices (Eslake in Salmon 2016).

Tourism is one of the fastest expanding industries and has highly benefited from the quality of produce and improvements in connectivity, based on expanded air travel capacity and cheaper air and ferry fares (Tourism Tasmania 2016a).[297] The government has recognised tourism as a strategic area for growth (Bolwell et al 2015, p. 661).[298] Despite the surge in the tourism industry, forestry, mining and manufacturing sectors are in decline, encouraging people to migrate, especially from the north and north-west (ABC News 2014; National Australia Bank 2016; O'Brien 2010).

of Statistics census information to shape community profiles, listed in 2011 Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Public Administration and Safety, and Education and Training as the main industry sectors of employers, which is indicative of Tasmania's population mix (small and old population), see <http://profile.id.com.au /australia/industries?WebID=150>. Furthermore, according to Economist Saul Eslake, dairy, beef production and the wine industry are the main contributors to the expansion of Tasmania's agricultural sector. Beef and wine production, in particular, have capitalised on Tasmania's brand strengths. Agriculture is the largest sector of the Tasmanian economy (9.6% GDP 2014-15), followed by tourism (9% GDP 2014-15). For more information, see Eslake (2015).

[295] The Goods and Services Tax (GST) 'is a broad-based tax of 10% on most goods, services and other items sold or consumed in Australia'. For more information, visit: https://www.ato.gov.au/business/gst/

[296] Tasmania has been involved in a long-time battle with other Australian states for the GST amount the state receive. Proposals to reform the distribution of GST based on population proportion will dramatically affect Tasmanians, since infrastructure investment costs are disproportionate for such a small population (Alessandrini 2011b, p. 652, 2015, p. 320). In 2016, a federal (national) review of the GST and federal funding towards the states threatened Tasmania's economic status (Bolwell et al 2016b).

[297] Visitor numbers increased by 8% in 2014 and expenditure by 9% following similar increases the year earlier. The Tasmanian Government, in light of the potential of increasing such numbers has significantly increased funding towards Tourism Tasmania's main marketing campaign 'Go Behind the Scenery' (2015-2017). The state's recent rapid increase in visitation and consequent boost to the tourism industry is a consequence of favourable economic conditions across Australia, as well as increased interest in international visitation, particularly from China (Tasmanian Government 2015). See, Tourism Tasmania Annual report 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

[298] According to Bolwell et al (2015), the government has committed $6 million (Australian dollars) for tourism marketing, with the hope to create 8,000 jobs. Under the 'T21-The Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy 2015-2020', a five-year plan to increase visitation, the Tasmanian Government allocated $15 million over three years in marketing budget to promote the state through two major domestic market campaigns (Tourism Tasmania 2016a).

Tasmania also acts as Australia's chief link to Antarctica. Its capital, Hobart, is considered the leading scientific Antarctic research hub of Australia, and hosts key hubs for research organisations such as the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) Marine and Atmospheric Sciences Centre, and the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS).[299]

While small business owners constitute a large fraction of the community, around 34% of Tasmanians rely on welfare payments as their primary source of income, mainly due to the large number of pensioners (Id, 2006). Today, the main employers in the state are the public sector (Eslake 2015) and private employers in tourism, like the Federal Group (owner of several hotels and casinos), heavy industry, like Bell Bay Aluminium, and fisheries and meat processing businesses.[300]

The island state faces socioeconomic challenges, such as the lowest population growth in the Australian nation, low education attainment levels, a gloomy future for manufacturing, and the lowest consumer expenditure in Australia (Bolwell et al 2015, p. 660). The issues of education attainment and welfare dependency in particular were reflected in participants' concerns about the future of Tasmania:

> The education system here is limited in resources and education is low and poorly valued in Northern Tasmania. So how can we support that from the arts that actually then builds community. And through the higher levels, how can we support a creative skilled industry that we can then use and not lose people (participant 19, focus group II).

> We have a state that's dependent on money coming in so we've had no drive to change and I feel there's other things people are trying to do about trying to inspire and create change, but we are more often trying to break down barriers and push that as a sentiment rather than leading a charge forward, and that's a big problem I think the state has (participant 1, in-depth interview).

As can be observed from the above account, Tasmania's image presents many contradictions. In fact, official data reflects only one side of the complex story of the island's development. It could be argued that the perceived lack of economic modernity is compensated for by its provision of amenity. One of the socioeconomic advantages of the state of Tasmania is its liveability, in terms of the safety of its society and closeness of its communities. In 2014, Hobart was ranked one of Australia's top three liveable cities, with '[t]he 546 Hobartians polled identified our attractive natural environment and a good range of quality affordable housing as our most positive

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[299] For more information, see http://www.csiro.au and http://www.imas.utas.edu.au/

[300] According to Eslake, Tasmania has a large public sector mainly due to the relative importance of its government business enterprises (GBEs). Its 'general government' sector is also larger relative to elsewhere in Australia. Bolwell et al (2016) note that Tasmania's state public sector accounted for 15.8% of total employment as of June 2015, compared with a national average of 12.7%. Bolwell et al (ibid) also note that unemployment rates for the state declined by 0.2% to 6.6% in 2016 (compared to 2015).

attributes, both coming in second place nationally, while safety for people and their properties came in third place' (Tasmanian Times 2014). In addition, house affordability and relatively low traffic congestion, except for the capital Hobart (Bolwell et al 2016b) are a result of '[s]trong positive net migration into Tasmania in recent times, together with an increased birth rate, change in household composition and smaller households all have strengthened the demand for more houses' (ABS 2008). Launceston was named by a Suncorp poll the most family friendly city in Australia in 2013, with Hobart being the 7th in the country.

> Even though Tasmania is an underprivileged society compared to the rest of Australia, still, it is pretty good, and there is a kind of passivity in the culture and the mendicant attitude. There is still this perception of federal government will bail us out. The leadership dialogue is framed in the mainstream, in the figure of the Premier. Of course the Premier is responsible for a lot, but it is just one person. Rather than this idea of people taking responsibility for effecting their own change. So it is a cultural thing. We had 20 something years of unbroken prosperity, and I know it hasn't trickled down to everyone but we really have it pretty good, so I don't necessarily see that changing unless all the money is withdrawn and that would be a big trauma for people (participant 20, in-depth interview).

Despite some areas in need for improvement, analysts maintain that Tasmania is currently going through an economic 'purple patch' (Grimmer 2015; Pascoe 2016) assisted by the weaker dollar and vibrant cultural and creative industries (Eslake in Salmon 2016). For instance, Grimmer observes a growth in economic confidence due to cultural tourism leveraging new arts developments (2015). Similarly, in a recent 2015 report commissioned by the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce Eslake highlighted business confidence, despite low economic prospects for the economy:

> Tasmania does have considerable potential. As a producer of high-value foods and beverages, as a niche producer of specialised manufactured products, as a tourist destination with particular appeal to visitors in search of unique experiences, as the home of leading-edge research in distinctive fields, as a place where housing is still affordable, as a home to a vibrant and distinctive range of cultural and artistic endeavours, and as a community better-placed than many to deal with the challenges associated with climate change (Eslake 2016b, p. 74).

Eslake's report also outlined the key strategic areas for the future of Tasmania's economy, primarily emphasising the importance of high-end produce and tourism, arts and cultural tourism, and a strong focus on food and beverage:

The eight W's of Tasmania's economic future	
Wool	For >150 years Tasmania has been producing the finest, most expensive wool in Australia
Water	Hydro's renewable energy sold at high prices to mainland wholsesale markets (and commanding on additional premium when carbon pricing returns) – plus irrigation (an enabler of expansion of the dairy industry) – plus premium water (from Cape Grim) in Qantas First Class and expensive restaurants – and prodcts from water (like salmon, abalone and oysters) – and boat-building, marine engineering, Antractic science, etc.
Wine	Tasmania now produces some of Australia's best, and mos expensive, premium wines
Whisky	High-priced distilled spirits branded using some of Tasmania's most distinctive characteristics
Wasabi	And other horticultural products (cherries, onions, turnips, truffles, etc.) sold to at high prices to sutimers in Northern Hemisphere countries (Japan, Germany, France) who are used to paying high prices in their off seasons
Wagyu	High-priced beef (retailing in Japan for >A$80 per kilo)
Walking	(and Wilderness). Unique experiences for which tourists will pay premium prices (dhould include adventure tourism like New Zealand)
Walshy	The unique MONA experience (and others like it)

Table 5. The Eight W's of Tasmania's Economic Future (adapted from Eslake 2016a).

Typically following an economic development logic of place branding, the products and experiences listed above are those upon which the Tasmanian Brand identity would be consequently built. A focus on economics and development has resulted in a clear emphasis on country-of-origin of branding, focusing on increasing high end produce exports, destination branding, or providing high-end tourism experiences in Tasmania. The following second part of the chapter reflects on how actors have sought to brand Tasmania, and the sections detail formal and informal attempts to brand Tasmania.

6.6 The Tasmanian Brand: almost two decades of formal place branding

Don't believe the guidebooks that tell you Tasmania is more English than England. Giant eucalyptus trees tower over creeks where platypus swim, 10ft tree ferns burst from the undergrowth, tiger snakes lurk in the grass and the woods are full of hopping wildlife. At dawn, Tasmania's temperate rain forests are heavy with the scent of lemon, peppermint and myrtle. Branches shower you with fragrant dew as you brush past. This is a long way from England. It's a long way from anywhere.

(Bruce in Brand Tasmania Council 2014c)

Being an island state, Tasmania has a quite distinctive sense of difference. Its insularity has encouraged a proactive search for connection with other places mainly for economic purposes (trade, increased visitation and attracting migration among others). Tasmania's image and reputation has been dominated in the past two decades by its place-of-origin and destination brands, primarily managed by private business (such as the hospitality giant Federal Group) and public organisations, such as the Brand Tasmania Council. The destination or tourism brand is managed by Tourism Tasmania (TT), a government tourism marketing organisation.

This section outlines first the strategies of the two public entities, Brand Tasmania (BT) and Tourism Tasmania (TT) in charge of formally branding the state. The account is followed by private industry and civil society attempts to brand the state, complemented by a description of informal branding efforts alongside an assessment of the role of the media. Finally, an account of place brand interactions is presented. I conclude by highlighting how the different brands projected by the different actors and stakeholders affect and collectively construct Tasmania's place brand identity, setting up the scene for the research intervention (for a complete overview of Tasmania's branding see Table 6 below).

TASMANIA'S PLACE BRANDING HISTORY TIMELINE *This table offers a quick review of the events that have marked the trajectory of Tasmania's branding process[301]		
YEAR	**ACTION**	**RELATION TO PLACE BRANDING**
1800s	Launceston and Hobart are settled under different administrations	Administration of colonial territory (political boundaries of territory)
1812	The two administrations (Launceston and Hobart) amalgamate and Hobart is declared seat of government which prompts the North and South political divide	Administration of colonial territory (political boundaries of territory)
1825	The independent colony of Van Diemen's Land is established mostly formed by convicts on Aboriginal land.	Regional branding
Mid 1820s-mid 1830s	Black war: a series of violent events that claimed the lives of over 200 colonists and almost annihilated the island's remaining Aborigines	Negative image, obscure past that will mark the identity of Tasmania
1856	The territory is renamed 'Tasmania' with the 1st sitting of Parliament.	The focus is on 'Wilderness'. However, the image of the island is still marked by the horrors of its colonial past and sense of inferiority to the mainland
1901	Tasmania becomes a state of the Australian Federation	The smallest state of Australia is marked by great socioeconomic differences in comparison with other Australian territories.
1970s	Efforts to support development of the north of the state start	The aim is to resolve the north and south political divide (also affecting the overall brand)
Late 1970s-1980s	Environmental debate over development of Tasmania's wilderness areas reaches the international community	Contested branding narratives threatening official country-of-origin branding
1972	Tasmanian elections see the formation of the world's 1st Green Party, the 'United Tasmania Group'	Highlights the important of the environmental movement and debate
Late **1990s**	The **Tasmanian Government starts attempts to formally brand the territory**.	**Focus on COO branding**

[301] Key: in grey, historical events that marked Tasmania's identity; in green, grass-roots or informal branding attempts; in blue, formal branding attempts; in yellow, private branding attempts.

	The Brand Tasmania Council is formed as a joint government-(multi)industry organisation with the aim to align brand message on the COO brand	
1996	Tourism Tasmania is formed as a destination management organisation	Focus on destination branding and industry liaison
1996	Port Arthur Massacre	Reminder of dark colonial past
1999	Private conglomerate 'Federal Group' develops the 'Pure Tasmania' brand to position their accommodation offer overseas.	First notable private branding campaign
2001	The 'Tasmania *Together*' participative process community consultation is launched by the government to set a vision for the states development	The open consultative process was aimed at engaging communities around decision-making for the territory
2008	Upon announcement of the construction of the New Museum of Old and New Art, MONA FOMA Festival is established and held for the first time in 2009	Conceived originally as a marketing tool to promote the museum, MONA FOMA soon became a referent in the international cultural scene, affecting positively the Tasmanian brand as a creative and quirky territory
2011	Official opening of MONA	The museum and its works on display bring international recognition to its capital Hobart, and the state and attract visitors to the state
2012	Tasmania *together* is dismantled by a Parliamentary Repeal Bill	Due to political debate on policy issues such as environmental debate and forestry
2013	First Dark MOFO Festival is held in winter expanding the impact of the museum and MOFO festival	Projects a year-round momentum focusing on a territory marked by the dynamisms of its creative industry
2014	Xi Jinping, President of China, visits Tasmania	Huge image boosts towards Chinese visitation, boosting also exports and increasing migration for education to the state
2015	Clear shift of Tourism Tasmania marketing towards a less traditional and quirkier image, echoing MONA's success with the campaign 'Go Behind the Scenery'	Tourism Tasmania is now established solely as a marketing agency for the destination brand

Table 6. Tasmania's Place Branding Timeline (Author's own).

6.6.1 Public branding attempts

[The] Origin Brand 'Brand Tasmania' is born representing the pride of Tasmania to local, national and international audiences.

(Brand Tasmania Council 2016)

The Tasmanian government has been formally branding the territory since the late 90s, although the vision and policies of the previous government set the tone for the image and reputation of the state. The Tasmanian Government formally adopted place branding in 1999 with the formation of a joint government and multi-industry Brand Tasmania Council (McGaurr et al 2015, p. 274, 276). The rationale behind such joint ventures was to achieve 'strong alignment of message' across stakeholders 'in competition or conflict' (Tasmanian Government 2006, p. 11).[302]

In addition to the Brand Tasmania Council, the Tasmanian Government created TT, once an industry development body, and now the state's tourism-marketing agency, charged with the task of attracting visitors to the state. TT's programs include the development of the destination brand 'Tasmania', national and international marketing and tourism campaigns and public relations. The organisation works closely with the state's Department of State Growth, Events Tasmania and other agencies responsible for the growth of Tasmania's visitor economy.[303]

a. Brand Tasmania: the umbrella brand

Figure 14. Brand Tasmania Attributes (Brand Tasmania Council 2014b).

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[302] A 'brand guide' released in 2006 by Brand Tasmania nominated tourism as the most important sectoral brand and forestry company Gunns Ltd as the strongest corporate brand. The brand guide cited Anholt's depiction of place branding as 'strategic communications strategy for government policy' (2015, p.276). The guide aimed at 'projecting a positive image of Tasmania to Tasmanians and our external audience that reflects the reality of the place and the aspirations of our people' (Tasmanian Government 2006). The brand guide also sets out the application of place branding principles through the citation of the works of prominent place brand scholars like Anholt (2004), in competitive advantage and brand equity, as well as Morgan, Pritchard and Pride's (2002) brand associations, and adopts Disney CEO Michael Eisner's brand definition '…a brand is a living entity — and it is enriched or undermined cumulatively over time, the product of a thousand small gestures', reinforcing the choice of Kotler and Gernter's (2002) definition of the image of a place as 'the sum of beliefs and impressions people in those markets hold about the place'. In a media release, Premier Hodgman identified 'engaging the community, stakeholders, industries and Brand Tasmania to promote the best of the territory' and has called on every Tasmanian to be 'ambassador for the state', therefore supporting their belief in the need for an umbrella brand for the place that could more effectively effect a positive reputation (2016b).

[303] TT supports four regional tourism organisations (RTOs) encouraging regional industry development, capacity-building and specific tourism marketing programs, acting effectively as advocates for their regions. TT's main goals are to maximise Tasmania's tourism potential and to drive demand for Tasmania. Tasmania's tourism contributes around $2.3 billion or 9.1% to Gross State Product with a direct contribution of $1.03 billion (around 4.1%) and an indirect contribution of a further $1.26 billion (around 5%). The industry is made up of around 2216 businesses and supports around 40,000 jobs in Tasmania or about 16.2% of total Tasmanian employment (direct and indirect contribution). For more information visit www.tourismtasmania.com.au. In addition, TT maintains a website portal with information for visitors: discovertasmania.com.au.

Brand Tasmania is a state-funded organisation with an independent council that aims to establish an umbrella brand for all things Tasmanian. The Council is composed of a paid CEO and staff, and voluntary members that include leaders of the private sector and representatives of the government,[304] and collaborates with leaders in various industry sectors (Brand Tasmania Council 2014a). Brand Tasmania Council's current vision is to see Tasmania recognised as a leader in the world of islands.[305] The Council considers itself the custodian of the Tasmanian Master Brand and its main task is to promote the advantages of living, working, learning, visiting and doing business in the State (Brand Tasmania Council 2014a). The Council believes that 'a place, like any product, is evaluated not only by its functional aspects, but also by its symbolic features' and therefore, that origin-branding can assist in educating audiences and build positive perceptions (Brand Tasmania Council 2014a). The Council's principal objectives are to heighten the profile, quality and value of Tasmanian products and services in the marketplace and to encourage a broad-based ownership of the State's brand by Tasmanian enterprises and the local community. Brand Tasmania's values are based on the pure, natural environment and quality and trustworthiness of its products:

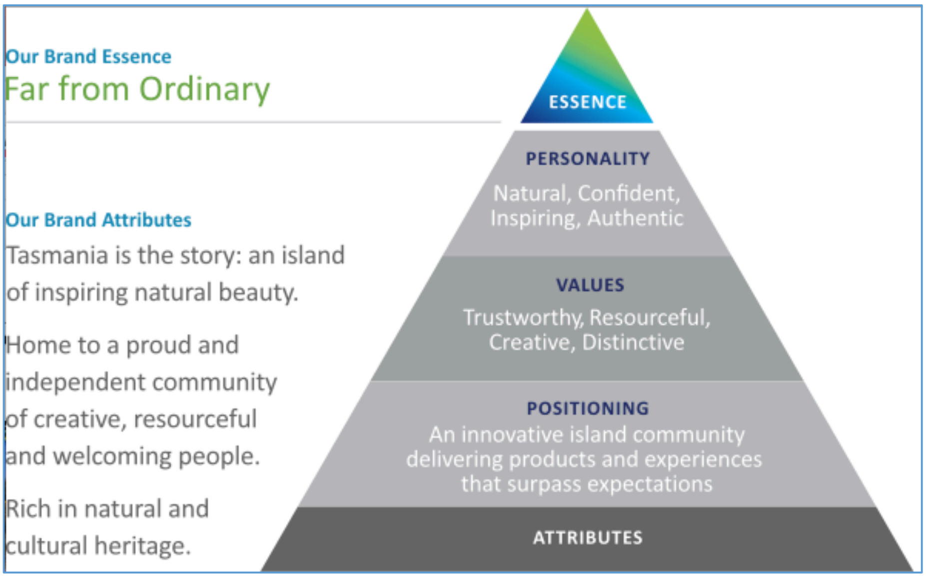

Figure 15. Brand Tasmania Identity (Brand Tasmania Council 2014c).

Despite the apparent hierarchical approach of the organisation, the Brand Tasmania Council recognises that place-of-origin brands have the potential to increase communities' self-esteem

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[304] Namely from the Department of State Growth and the Arts and the Department of Primary Industries, Water and the Environment.

[305] '… [Brand Tasmania Council] members are inspired by Tasmania's rich natural and cultural heritage, as well as the resourcefulness, vision and creativity of the Tasmanian people' (Brand Tasmania 2014a). For more information, visit www.brandtasmania.com.au.

by enhancing the value of the local environment and making citizens ‘proud of their heritage’. This perspective appears to be linked to a perceived need for holistic engagement to gain the support of residents and business.[306]

A report on the state of ‘Brand Tasmania’ commissioned by the Brand Tasmania Council found that Tasmanians feel that in the last 20 years they have been successfully and positively ‘put on the map’ (Farley & Felmingham 2010). However, the task of the Council is often criticised by both government and industry members due to their inability to project a common brand identity for the state, in other words, act as an umbrella brand:

> I think the philosophy of Brand Tasmania’s fine. The structure, the entity, the approach, and the brand mark are all wrong. It doesn’t work (participant 7, in-depth interview).

Figure 16. Brand Tasmania logo (Brand Tasmania Council 2014b).

‘Brand Tasmania’ is supported by a number of channels and marketing initiatives. Its website, ‘www.brandtasmania.com’, is the main marketing tool and hosts a comprehensive portfolio of text, imagery and audio-visual material around Tasmania’s success stories.[307] Those stories predominantly come from Brand Tasmania’s partners, that is, businesses in Tasmania with an established brand and recognised success nationally and/or internationally. Their news and those of the state’s positive advancements make up a series of newsletters, named ‘eFriends’, that are distributed nationally and internationally with the aim of lifting Tasmania’s brand profile. In addition, regular partners’ newsletters are distributed to inform their stakeholders about the

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[306] The Brand Tasmania Council (2014b) lists in their strategies the ‘appropriateness of the brand architecture and its ability to be inclusive of all known stakeholders’ although it does not specifically describe who the ‘known stakeholders are’, implying perhaps a focus on economic players and main industries. In addition, it supports the Origin Brand as a reflection of its brand essence identified as ‘far from ordinary’. The brand essence, arguably, does not reflect the identity of the island territory, but rather focuses on marketing positioning, differentiating itself from ‘the ordinary’. In terms of the actual branding decision making process, the organisation reflects a highly hierarchical top-down approach to place branding, since its objective is ‘[the] creation of a Place-of-Origin Brand for Tasmania - with a logic inclusive of practical and actionable guidelines; and [the] development a visual identity system that could be used by all stakeholders from both government and the private sectors across various mediums including packaging, print and online’ (Brand Tasmania Council 2016b). The actions outlined in BT’s strategies reflect the process of developing marketing campaign, and neglect the development of holistic engagement processes with stakeholders. BT is the organisation in charge of formulating and implementing the ‘positioning lines for the Origin Masterbrand Identity’ and advising the measures of success of the program (ibid).

[307] The information on the website is divided in 16 main industry pillars, namely: agriculture, Antarctic and Southern Ocean, arts, education, energy, fisheries, food and beverage, forestry and timber, information and communications technology, infrastructure, marine manufacturing, media and entertainment, minerals and mining, services and products, textile clothing and footwear, and tourism. For more information, visit <brandtasmania.com>.

activities of the Brand Tasmania Council (further engagement takes place in the form of marketing workshops and networking functions in the state).

Figure 17. Brand Tasmania Advertisement Sample (www.brandtasmania.com).

The work of Brand Tasmania has been criticised for its focus on county-of-origin (COO) branding and its failure to incorporate and respond to other values of the Tasmanian imaginary:

> I think Brand Tasmania is not even real, so that carries no weight at all. Tourism Tasmania create some fake brands and… they carry some weight in terms of advertising but they are advertising so that consumers see what it is. I don't think it actually holds a lot of weight in terms of what Tasmania really is, people see it as an ad for Tasmania. My personal opinion is that they can jam as much as they want in that but it's an ad. And it raises awareness and it might raise interest. I am not saying that they don't work, but I don't think it's the brand of Tasmania (participant 16, in-depth interview).

6.6.2 Tourism Tasmania

To achieve our goal, Tourism Tasmania's activities focus on brand marketing, content generation, brand advocacy and working with partners to increase awareness and bookings.

(Tourism Tasmania 2016, p. 7)

In 2014, TT ceased being a full-service State Tourism Organisation providing industry support to become a standalone marketing agency, thus obtaining creative freedom to market the state (Tourism Tasmania 2015).[308] In addition, as noted previously, TT is complemented by four government funded regional tourism organisations covering the North West and West Coast,

[308] The government's Department of State Growth has, since then, taken on the responsibility for supply-side development and for that purpose has partnered with the main private industry body, the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania (TICT) to provide strategic direction and align government's investment and resources to increase visitation. TT and TICT are major partners in an initiative to boost tourism, known as The Visitor Economy Strategy (2015-2021) or T21.

East Coast and South, as well as a Tasmanian Visitor Information Network, formed by 21 visitor information centres across the state (Tourism Tasmania 2016a).

Figure 18. Tourism Tasmania corporate logo (Tourism Tasmania 2015).

As outlined in the Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy (T21 2015), the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania (TICT) and the Tasmanian Government have agreed on a common marketing strategy to enhance Tasmania's image to increase visitation:

> Our vision is for Tasmania to be a world-leading destination of choice, with a vibrant visitor economy supported by our tourism and hospitality industries, strong business and education sectors and a community that embraces our visitors and the benefits they bring (T21 2015, p. 3).[309]

The reason for government's investment and emphasis on the tourism brand revolves mainly around its economic benefits, being one of the most promising growth areas of the Tasmanian economy. Tourism visitation rates are steadily increasing and in 2016, 1.24 million visitors and over $2.14 billion dollars of expenditure were recorded in the calendar year, an increase of 7% from 2015 (Tourism Tasmania Corporate 2017c).[310]

Although very different in its formulation and positioning, the tourism brand builds on similar attributes to the place-of-origin brand. Tasmania's largely unspoilt natural environment has been used to promote visitation and has inspired slogans like '*A World Apart, Not a World Away'* (see Figure 18) reflective of the perception that 'Tasmania is known nationally and internationally as a spectacularly pristine land and sea environment with a rich cultural heritage and a world-class food and wine offering' (Tourism Tasmania 2015).[311]

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[309] The Tasmanian Government strongly backs the tourism industry since it recognises its role as a driver of economic growth and job creation. Furthermore, the Tasmanian Government recognises the importance of destination branding for the state's reputation, adding that '[tourism] showcases all that's great about our state' (Hodgman 2016).

[310] For more data visit Tourism Info Monitor (TIM) survey statistics at <www.tourismtasmania.com.au>. TIM is a regular quarterly survey by Tourism Tasmania of approximately 1,500 travelling Australians (people who have taken a holiday in the last 12 months or are considering a holiday in the next 12 months).

[311] For more information on Tourism Tasmania campaigns visit <www.tourismtasmania.com.au>.

Figure 19. Tourism Tasmania Advertisement Sample (www.discovertasmania.com.au)

TT's brand is aimed mainly at domestic (Australian) markets, targeting primarily a group of people labelled as 'Life Long Learners', interested in 'exploring and learning more about the world in which they live' (Tourism Tasmania 2016, p.15). TT's marketing focuses on 'third-party advocacy', leveraging and amplifying positive associations of consumers, mainly through social media and coverage by independent journalists (Tourism Tasmania 2016). Among the main reasons cited for visiting the Apple Isle are fresh seafood, great cheese and a range of quality produce that exceed travellers' expectations, as well as the stunning scenery and the wilderness areas and its magnificent walks. This view is contrary to the gloomy internal discourse about Tasmania, and demonstrates the positive associations by visitors of both the island and its people.

TT's branding consists mainly of a series of mainstream and seasonal themed advertisement campaigns and recent ones include 'Go Behind the Scenery' (currently in its ninth round), a fresh approach emphasising experiences highlighting 'the offbeat and original, and Tasmania's natural beauty set against the brutality of its convict past', Season of Curious (second round) , and #TassieStyle (Tourism Tasmania 2017b).[312]

6.6.3 Private branding attempts

This section refers to non-government directed and/or funded attempts to brand the state. It includes private and bottom-up attempts, as well as the role of the media in shaping the identity and image of Tasmania, often by enabling debate on shared issues that affect the state and its reputation.

6.6.3.1 Federal Group: 'Pure Tasmania'

The Federal Group is Tasmania's largest private sector employer with over 2,400 staff

[312] Campaign elements include videos, cinema advertising, print and online advertisements, and public affairs activities. For more information, visit <http://www.tourismtasmania.com.au/marketing/campaigns>.

throughout the state and the leading player in the Tasmanian tourism industry, with a significant stable of tourism assets. The group developed 'Pure Tasmania' as its tourism brand (see Figure 19), to highlight their unique proposition for accommodation and experiences to key Tasmanian visitor markets interstate and overseas, generating significant exposure to the state through their public relations, marketing and communications.[313]

Figure 20. Federal Group's 'Pure Tasmania' Logo (Federal Group 2016).

Pure Tasmania was conceived as a state-wide tourism brand highlighting Tasmania as an iconic tourism destination, renowned for its wilderness, heritage and world-class food and wine. However, the 'Pure Tasmania' brand received criticism for its resemblance to the '100% Pure New Zealand' brand established in 1999 by the New Zealand government with the aim to doubling the country's tourism intake by 2005 (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggot 2002, p. 335; Mitchell 2008, p. 215).[314] The 'Pure Tasmania' brand is also affected locally by a negative perception of business by sections of the local community due to Federal's gambling license in Tasmania (Boyce 2017).[315] The primary issues related to the Tasmanian government awarding a 20-year gambling monopoly license deed in 2003 to the Federal Group with the condition that Federal improve the financial return to the government and build a new luxury resort at Coles Bay on Tasmania's East Coast (Herr 2008, p. 649). The result was the Saffire Hotel and Resort, named the best boutique hotel in the world in 2014 at the World Boutique Hotel awards and number one luxury hotel in Australia by Trip Advisor, among other accolades (Federal Group 2015).

[313] Pure Tasmania includes five separate and unique destination resorts and experiences: Strahan Village, Freycinet Lodge, Cradle Mountain Chateau, Saffire Freycinet, and the Henry Jones Art Hotel. Each resort includes a range of premium accommodation, dining and unique ways to experience the local area, showcasing a series of unique and quirky Tasmanian experiences.

[314] For more information on the appropriation of the success 'pure' brand of New Zealand, see Mitchell (2008). For more information on 100% Pure New Zealand branding campaign see: Morgan et al (2002).

[315] Tasmania's budget high dependency on gambling revenue was observed in Alessandrini's political chronicle of the state as 'an emerging and damaging picture of a ruthless state government trading in human misery' (2010a, p. 315).

6.6.3.2 The MONA effect

We know that MONA, but not just MONA, has done more to change the image which other Australians have of Tasmania than any other single thing that has happened here.

(Eslake, 2016b, p. 5)

One of the most significant recent developments Tasmania has ever seen has been the Museum of Old and New Art or MONA, the largest privately-owned museum complex in Australia by wealthy philanthropist David Walsh, that soon became one of Tasmania's and Australia's top tourism attractions.[316]

> One thing's for sure: nobody could have predicted the arrival of a world-class museum and art gallery on the rust-belt shores of the River Derwent in the working-class suburb of Glenorchy, Hobart. And who would argue with the idea that art and cultural expression aren't precisely what such places want (Franklin 2014, p. 10).

Figure 21. Museum of Old and New Art Logo (mona.net.au).

MONA is a highly successful museum and associated music and arts festivals (MOFO and Dark MOFO). In addition, MONA has effectively contributed to the redevelopment of the state's brand, towards a more adventurous and quirky identity. MONA's festivals, created specifically to act as marketing tools for MONA, in fact support the state. For instance, Mona Foma (MOFO) was conceived as 'absolutely, 100 per cent a marketing exercise' (MOFO curator Brian Ritchie in Salmon 2016). The Festival aimed at building the museum's profile and a sense of community, as well as providing a taste of what was to come in the museum (Salmon 2016).[317] Thus, beyond

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[316] The success of the museum is supported by a great events calendar in Hobart consisting on MONA's own MONA FOMA and DARK MOFO, as well as the renowned Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race followed by the Taste of Tasmania, an annual food and wine festival. Other various events across the state include the rally Targa Tasmania, the agricultural show Agfest, Royal Hobart and Royal Launceston Shows and an array of music festivals such as Falls Festival and arts festivals such as Ten Days on the Island, Festival of Voices and Junction Arts Festival. Tasmania is home to a vibrant host of artists and composers and to the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. A few statistics on MONA's tourism value: 30% of total visitors to Tasmania in 2015 visited MONA, the second most visited tourism attraction behind the Salamanca Market in Hobart. 4% of them stated that they were very influenced to visit because of MONA. For more information, see the 'MONA Visitor Profile: March 2016', accessed from TT's website, <tourismtasmania.com.au>. 'Salamanca Market highlights fine Tasmanian art & craft including hand-worked glass, innovative design in Tasmanian timbers, stylish clothing and bold ceramics' (for more information, visit <http://www.hobartcity.com.au/hobart/hobart_events/salamanca_market>).

[317] In 2016, the Tasmanian Government contributed $350,000 a year to MOFO and $2.1 million a year to Dark MOFO (in Australian dollars). The expected return to the economy is $46 million in interstate and overseas visitation. For

the increased visitation numbers that the museum contributed to, the branding of MONA's events has also further enhanced Tasmania's cultural industries and brand.[318] During the focus group discussions, participants argued that the influence of MONA and its festivals extends from supporting cultural industries to reformulating or reinventing Tasmania's brand, from simply 'clean and green' to 'quirky, interesting and vibrant', although MONA's festivals have in part been perceived as threatening the resources traditionally held by other festivals:

> Building of the MONA brand it was clear that that would be the best sort of opportunity to really try and change the perception of Tasmania in the winter. There was a substantial funding commitment to support MONA holding this Festival in the winter. And deliberately to have it trying and leverage that into the events, so there was a whole cluster of things happening. There has been collaboration, but I think an uneasiness about that that was a bit of competitive rivalry which manifested in a whole heap of different ways, including how people were talking about each other's festival. There then some explicit cross-promotion, sort of forced in though. I think there are cordial interactions, but behind there is concern about '*them*, cannibalising *us*' (participant 17, focus group III).

Figure 22. Impression of the Museum of Old and New Art. Image by Moorilla Gallery.

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more details, see: Hodgman 2016, see also Hewett 2016. In addition, TT committed $323,500 to Promote Dark MOFO, quoting 'high affinity with be brand' (Tourism Tasmania 2016).

[318] The Tasmanian Premier Hodgman stated that visitation doubled from 128,000 in 2013 to 280,000 in 2015 during its winter festival Dark MOFO, to what Luke Martin, CEO of TICT added that the festival had shifted perceptions about Tasmania as a winter destination (in Hewett 2016).

Although the museum and its potential might have not been fully appreciated in the planning stages as evidenced by Franklin's comments 'striking, mysterious and cool, it was loud but didn't give much away' (2014, p. 141). Again, the media took little interest in MONA's brand and the expansion of its business model are not exempt from controversy.[319] In 2013 David Walsh unveiled his plans for a boutique casino that would appeal to high-end Asian tourists. This announcement started a media battle for the gambling rights with the Federal Group which, at the end of 2015 agreed to 'allow' a potential license of a boutique casino at MONA, provided Federal's license was extended (Bolwell et al 2015, p. 662).[320]

6.7 The role of media

Tasmania, you know, is how, wilderness is how the greatest value, greatest for tourism. The one camp says you don't do anything on the other side […] The other one says our wilderness is our best tourism experience, what you need to do is you need to unlock that, and you need to be able to do activities on the other side of the fence.

(participant 8, focus group IV)

In the destination or tourism branding realm, since 2000, Tasmania has seen an increase of international recognition by travel organisations, publications and industry bodies, including recent Condé Nast Traveller's Readers' Choice Award 2015, where Tasmania was awarded 10th in the Top 30 Islands in the World, and Lonely Planet's ranking of Tasmania at number four in the world's 'Top 10 Regions to Visit' in 2015 (Tourism Tasmania 2015, p. 7).[321] Tourism operators also received unprecedented recognition at the 2014 and 2015 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards (Hodgman 2015). In addition, Tourism Tasmania has successfully been promoting the state through the Visiting Journalist Program (VJP), which brings carefully selected media from national and international markets to Tasmania to experience Tasmania's tourism products firsthand and in turn write editorials. Brand Tasmania maintains a VJP as well, targeting prominent national and international journalists to connect the media to as many interesting and innovative Tasmanian businesses as possible. However, there are risks associated

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[319] MONA's brand purposely diverted from the 'normal' or 'average', in direct opposition with Tasmania's mostly traditional and conservative societal values: 'MONA's Brand Values are: reason, radicalism, egalitarism, pedagogy and pleasure. We will be: Iconoclastic, Radical, Controversial, Fun, Brave. We will not be: Conventional, Didactic, Highbrow, Dumb, Serious, Dictated to' (Franklin 2014, p. 167). 'We were very concerned not to be seen being dictated to, not being a normal museum, but having our own ideas instead, all those values that David [Walsh] has that don't necessarily tie in with government values. So along with the free thought idea, we gave out thought-bubble stickers and black textas to street artists, and we said, 'Don't stick them up and don't write anything on them!' And so, they basically got all our brand values across for us and we didn't have to do a thing: and [it] was all paid by the state government. [The stickers] are still around now; it was just us being a little bit naughty. So that's how we kind of set the tone for how we deal with government'. (Leigh Carmichael in Franklin 2014, p. 167).

[320] So they could see return on an additional $100 million Australian dollars' investment on their casinos and properties in Tasmania, such as Wrest Point, Country Club, among others (Bolwell et al 2015).

[321] For a full list of accolades and awards visit <www.tourismtasmania.com.au>.

with free editorial content.[322] Some events, like the visit to Hobart by Chinese President *Xi Jinping* and the Chinese First Lady in 2014, can increase positively Tasmania's profile in its main international markets significantly (Bolwell et al 2015, p. 658), whereas media also portrays frictions in the management of heritage sites and the debate over conservation versus tourism development, for instance, can lead to negative effects on Tasmania's image.[323]

6.8 Bottom-up branding and civil society engagement in Tasmania

> *Deep divisions exist about the effects on community and place of various processes of economic globalisation and ecological modernization, especially those involving resource-extractive industries such as forestry.*
>
> *(Stratford 2008, p. 160)*

Tasmania's political agenda has been characterised by the 'deep antagonism between conservation and development' and the state's economy has been characterised by 'hydro-industrialization, agriculture and resource extraction', alongside produce exports to international markets (Stratford 2008, pp. 163-164). Tasmania has in fact been described as 'the only political system in the world primarily informed by the environment' (Hay 1991, p. 64 in Lester 2007, p. 907).

6.8.1 Environmental concern

Tasmania's society has traditionally been divided over environmental issues that affect or support its development, with great resources poured from all sides in notable battles in a dialectic campaign echoed by the media.

With their advocacy and activism, environmentalists have been able to stop major development and infrastructure projects. For example, the construction of the Franklin River Dam and the creation and enlargement of the Wilderness World Heritage Area (saving the island's precious old-growth Tarkine rainforests) in the north west of the state, as well as the halt of private development proposals for pulp or woodchip mills, and blocking of converting native forests into plantations (Buckman 2008, p. 223).[324] To highlight how the environmental concern has generated polarising views that have effected Tasmania's brand and reputation, the case of the construction of the Franklin River Dam in Tasmania's north west is discussed.

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[322] For more information on the Visiting Journalist Program, see <www.tourismtasmania.com.au/marketing/vjp>.

[323] However, there seems to be consensus in government that 'a *massified* approach to tourism is not in the best interest of the Tasmanian brand long-term' (Bolwell et al 2015, p. 662).

[324] The conservation movement was then able to set aside 39% of Tasmania's public land (Buckman 2008). Protests to protect the environment have been also held in other parts of Australia, whose development based on the exploitation of its natural resources is labelled as 'quarry economy' (Crowley & Walker 2012, p. 175).

Figure 23. Protests to Protect Tasmania's World Heritage areas. Image by Matthew Newton, The Bob Brown Foundation.

Environmental debate in the late 70s and 80s became the overriding issue dividing communities between conservation and development of natural assets (Crowley & Walker 2012).[325] In 1970s the Hydro Electric Commission (HEC), following government strategy aimed at producing economic power, flooding Lake Pedder, located in the north west of the state in a remote area, despite the many protest and opposition from the local community (Stratford 2008). Lake Pedder's controversial flooding was then followed by an anti-dam campaign to save the Franklin River (Denholm 2012).[326] The Wilderness Society was formed as a result in 1976 (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 208), became not only one of the most successful lobby groups in Australia, but indirectly encouraged the creation of the Greens Party and the rise of Bob Brown as national Greens Leader. This consequently raised the profile of Tasmanian sentiments and natural environment issues on the national political agenda and world stage.[327]

[325] Walker, in his analysis of Australia's construction of environmental policy argues that 'Australia's pattern of development is a form of *statism*, in which government takes a major, often dominant, role in development and economic management' (Walker 2012, p. 13). Thus, pro-development policy makers made economic development prevail over other socialist or welfare objectives, removing any objects to growth (Crowley & Walker 2012).
[326] Greens leaders have maintained that there are strong economic reasons for protecting the environment, for instance, increasing the number of tourists visiting wilderness world heritage areas, maintaining that Tasmania had been 'the great bushwalking mecca for people from all over Australia' (Denholm 2012).
[327] Similar uproar and community divide was observed around the proposal for the Bell Bay Pulp Mill to be developed in the Tamar Valley in the north of the state that faced strong environmental compliance requirements and sensitivity or outright opposition (for a review of the controversial proposal and approval processes see Gale 2011). Other issues currently under scrutiny are logging and mining in the Tarkine region, and tourism development in World Heritage Areas like the Cradle Valley (ABC 2015). There is a heightened interest in protecting the flora and fauna of the state, following the demise of several species. Many flora and fauna species are unique to Tasmania, such as the iconic Tasmanian devil became the largest carnivorous marsupial in the world following the extinction of the thylacine or Tasmanian tiger in 1936 (Parks & Wildlife Service 2017).

In 1983, the High Court of Australia set a precedent and extended the Commonwealth jurisdiction over environmental matters with the ruling of the halt to construction in Tasmania of the hydroelectric power Franklin Dam. It was the result of a successful environmental campaign by the Tasmanian Wilderness Society (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 202, 212), that included lobbying, publicity campaigns and protests that echoed in national and international media, thus affecting the image and reputation of Tasmania and Australia. The Wilderness Society capitalised on the media attention reinforcing importance of protecting the wilderness areas through which the Franklin river flowed (McGaurr 2014, p. 29). Eco-activists' networks role in the Franklin River campaign that led to a better use of resources, and they continue to influence policy and ultimately impact the image and reputation of Tasmania (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 103).

The Tasmanian case is an example of how an issue (wilderness preservation) can unleash action by civil society that results in changes to policy (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 219). Ideally, different perspectives should be incorporated earlier in the process of decision making since 'wilderness preservation often requires a comprehensive and uncompromising approach to policy making, and for this reason it does not sit too comfortably with mainstream politics' (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 218).[328]

The success of the environmental movement in public relations encouraged the Tasmanian Government to incorporate 'wilderness' into its marketing efforts (McGaurr et al 2015, p. 283).[329] McGaurr et al argue that 'place branding has contributed to the routinization of "wilderness" and to a shift in the focus of mediated conflict from "wilderness" to "tourism"' (2015, p. 269). Consequently, the values of the natural environment have trespassed transnational domains through the incorporation of 'wilderness' values in the state's produce and tourism brands.[330]

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[328] A referendum saw the Liberal party returning into power and securing legislation authorising the Franklin dam. However, in 1982 Premier Fraser nominated the Western Tasmanian Wilderness National Parks to be included in the World Heritage, drawn up on boundaries that would permit construction of a different scheme (Olga) but not the Franklin (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 214). A successful media campaign by the Wilderness Society over a blockade of works in the Olga resulted in the offer of a $500 million compensation package from the Commonwealth if the dam construction was to come to a halt and, subsequently, after the election, newly elected Prime Minister Hawke passed a *World Heritage Properties Conservation Act 1983* that stopped the project and provided Tasmania with $290 million in compensation. The national victory of environmentalists had an opposite effect in Tasmania, votes supported liberal governments in favour of HEC plans and a pro-development attitude prevailed in state policy. Premier Gray's Liberal government would face defeat in the polls over the issue of the Wesley Vale pulp mill in 1989, in which the ALP returned to power under a minority Labor-Green accord, advancing reforms in environmental policy. See Doyle and Kellow (1995). See also (Gale 2011) for a detailed account of the environmental assessment of Gunns Ltd proposed pulp mill in the Tamar Valley that arguably led to flawed or corrupt environmental assessment practices.

[329] In fact, McGaurr et al argue that as a result, tourism boosted its visitation numbers and that the idea of 'wilderness' was used to promote an image of the Tasmanian government as environmentally responsible protecting its forestry industry against criticism from the environmental movement message (2015 p. 282).

[330] To what Lester adds that the Tasmanian wilderness experience has evolved from one of hardship to luxury and quality food and wine, and natural experiences (2010, p. 133).

Political debates around Tasmanian wilderness also resulted in the formation of the world's first Greens party, following 1967 Tasmanian fires and the flooding of Lake Pedder (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 207). The lack of interest by major political parties in environmental protection gave rise to the 'United Tasmania Group' (UGT), the first 'Green' Party in the world, to contest the 1972 state election (Doyle & Kellow 1995, p. 207). [331] The UTG's immediate concern was to save the aforementioned Lake Pedder. Even today, the party has a distinctive political culture and values with a 'grassroots' organisational structure reflecting its origins in social and environmental movements and citizen-led activism and its influence extended even to New Zealand, were the 'Values Party' was formed as a Green party (McCann 2012).

6.9 Community governance: Tasmania *Together*

> *Tasmania Together is an Australian first, a people driven 20 year social, environmental and economic plan, but one also strongly driven in terms of leadership, conviction and process from the top.*
>
> *(Crowley & Coffey 2007, p.5)*

Tasmania *Together* was a community-owned and driven 20-year social, environmental and economic plan for the State of Tasmania, whose aim was to present a community vision for the State and a set of indicators to support politicians to identify economic and societal priorities, as well as aligning purpose and action (Alessandrini 2011; Crowley 2006; Crowley & Coffey 2007; Stratford 2006). In an attempt to bring together Tasmanians in deeply divisive political conflicts, namely the reduction of parliamentary seats, gambling in hotels and bars, and the clear-cutting of rain forests, then Tasmanian Labor Leader Jim Bacon introduced the project to the Tasmanian government in 2001 (Alessandrini 2013a). Although it was envisioned by the Government as the blueprint for the following 20 years of State development, upon its announcement, it was labelled as a 'two-year corporatist "public" consultation process' (Herr 2002, p.281).[332] The pioneering project's aim was for people of Tasmania to have a say and work collaboratively to achieve their long-term social, economic and environmental future, and its vision read 'Tasmania is an island

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[331] During the 1970s, as observed above, anti-logging campaigns in Tasmania echoed in the national media translated the emergence of an increasingly politicised conservation movement accross Australia. UTG, as the world's first ecological political party, was created in 1972—its members galvanised by the Tasmanian Government's proposal to flood Lake Pedder as part of its hydro-electric power scheme (Milne 2006). The UTG narrowly missed winning a seat in the 1972 Tasmanian state election and the party disbanded, but its campaign marked the beginning of green politics in Australia and inspired the creation of Green parties worldwide.

[332] Tasmania *Together,* a model for community governance in Tasmania, presented similarities to the New South Wales (NSW) Mittagong forum, formed by the environment sector offering an innovative model with outstanding communication, co-operation and capacity building, and was free from the corporatism of peak bodies and the government (Staples 2012, p. 171). The Mittagong forum illustrated that a strong civic movement that can articulate its arguments and persuade public opinion can set agendas and provide vision for governments' policies (ibid 2012, p. 172). Tasmania *Together* was also inspired by the US project 'Oregon shines' in 1989, where Governor Neil Goldschmidt developed common goals to resolve conflicts over clear-cutting of the rain forests (Crowley & Coffey 2007, p. 5).

community, unique for its natural and cultural environment, where people enjoy a prosperous lifestyle based on quality, creativity, and opportunity' (Tasmania Together 2020 2011).

The project was derived from the most extensive consultation process undertaken in the history of Tasmania, and although it was certainly not short of controversy, it contributed to 'the policy development-role of third sector organisations' (Alessandrini 2011, p. 60) and greater engagement of Tasmanian communities in the policy-making process. Some goals and benchmarks, particularly concerning the environment and forestry, ignited debate and fostered commentary in all sections of society and provided opportunities for analysis through its various public meetings (Tasmania *Together* 2002).[333]Tasmania *Together* was remarkably open and consultative, and a new form of democratic process. However, the project faced opposition from interest groups whose activities were restrained, such as operators of gaming machines, tobacco and the timber industries. The impressive project came to an end in 2012 when the Tasmania *Together* Progress Board Repeal Bill 2012 was passed.[334] In her Second Reading speech of the repeal bill, the then Premier, Labor MP Lara Giddings argued that:

> The Government has made the decision to disband the Board and for the Board's resources to be redirected to supporting the Government's key priorities in data collection, performance reporting and community consultation and engagement.
>
> Over the past 11 years Tasmania *Together* has laid a solid foundation in data collection and performance reporting, as well as in community engagement. I now want to build on what we have learned through Tasmania *Together* so that we can deliver real, practical outcomes in communities. (Giddings 2012, emphasis added).

Although Tasmania *Together* was not a formal network, it could be regarded as a government imitative aimed at encouraging community engagement. The Tasmania *Together* process set a series of political, economic and social goals for Tasmania, and monitored the state's performance through well-established key performance indicators based on benchmarks and priorities. Tasmania *Together*'s demise was the result of conflicts of interest between government and its big economic players (for instance, fund-raising taxes from gambling). The plan signalled Tasmanians' clearly expressed desire to stop clear-felling in old-growth forests of high conservation value by the end of 2002, and faced the lobbying and pressures of forestry companies (Ajani 2007, p.292). Consequently, the government decided to close the network down, demonstrating another example of the flawed policy processes of governments (in turn)

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[333] The Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) was up for review of progress of implementation in 2002.
[334] In other cases, similar projects were transferred to universities, such as the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW), an initiative born in 1999, when the Atkinson Foundation (AF) convened a group of index experts from across Canada including Statistics Canada to study the long-term initiative of establishing an index to gather national indicators of quality of life. From 2006-2008 the CIW developed public consultation engaging key stakeholders and established a community of users. The CIW was moved to the University of Waterloo and information can be accessed at <https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/>.

in charge of Tasmania's regional development (McCall 2011, p. 18). The divisive anger generated in the community, compounded by the government's apprehension to address issues of environmental concern were reflected in participants' accounts, for example: 'the forestry issue and that anxiety within the community about any kind of disagreement' (participant 20, in-depth interview).

6.10 Brand interactions

> *Tourism has its brand, it's about creating profit and differentiation in the market, is that the brand that Tasmania has, they don't care, probably, what gets visitors to Tasmania and enjoy the Tasmanian experience, that's what they're looking for. Brand Tasmania wants to sell more products. What gets into the Asian market at the moment is our clean, green, and organic brand.*
>
> *(participant 1, in-depth interview)*

In terms of formal branding, Brand Tasmania could be interpreted as a marketing program co-administered by government with non-tourism interests and primarily focused on exports.[335] TT, on the contrary, is its homogeneous organisation for marketing Tasmania as a tourism destination, charged with conducting destination branding and management. TT defines the Tasmanian brand from a consumer point of view, identifying the main attributes of the tourism product or service as:

> A brand is the personality that identifies a product, service or company. It's the associations that people make with the product - their thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences and attitudes. It is not a tagline, though a tagline should communicate the qualities of the brand (Tourism Tasmania 2016a).[336]

Despite Brand Tasmania's claims of being the 'umbrella' brand for the state, TT has strategically become one of the biggest drivers of Tasmania's image and reputation.[337] Participants argued that whereas there was a clear purpose for the destination brand, the official Brand Tasmania seemed to lack a clear strategy: 'they [Brand Tasmania] don't have a strategy. And Tourism does. They've got specific visitor numbers and they've got to see them come in over the next 5-year period' (participant 17, in-depth interview).

Since 2014, TT operating solely as a marketing organisation has been actively engaging with industry members in an attempt to bridge a perceived disconnect between its main stakeholders and establish a brand co-creation process for the destination. TT's increased consultation efforts

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[335] Brand Tasmania Council's communication efforts are limited to partners and *efriends* newsletters, as well as occasional networking functions and media releases. There is no real interest in engaging with civil society, since the majority of the organisation's strategic planning and decision-making is conducted by their council members often following recommendations or findings from different consultants engaged during the process and the projected image is set to be communicated to consumers and foreign audiences. See <www.brandtasmania.com>.

[336] For more information, see <http://www.tourismtasmania.com.au/brand>.

[337] A holistic Tasmanian brand, however, should have an extended scope that includes the tourism and non-tourism sectors, including local residents and businesses, in order to truly include all stakeholders.

with industry have translated into a more positive and engaged tourism industry community that supports the state's tourism brand.[338] However, tourism branding often has been leading the states' promotion more accidentally than strategically:

> [Brand Tasmania] evolved into place of origin, and is trying to put Tasmania on the map, but it's been driven by people who go out and sell things and the reputation. And in recent times tourism has been quite strong, but [Brand Tasmania] see[s] the Tasmanian brand as the umbrella brand, and then underneath that there are the other sectors, and tourism is just one of those. If you were talking to people about the Tasmanian tourism experience, they would associate values to it, some of which would be a part of our old Tasmanian brand but not all of them (participant 22, in-depth interview).

Despite the fact that Brand Tasmania's board emphasise that COO branding has proven to be a successful program and the sustained positive reputation has enhanced trade and therefore economic development in Tasmania (as detailed in BT's commissioned research by Farley & Felmingham 2010), the government is now encouraging collaboration between the two main branding organisations, since the prospects of the tourism industry leading economic development through increased visitation are based in great measure on its acclaimed high quality produce (Rockliff 2016; T21 2015). This is reflected in participants' views:

> At Tourism Tasmania, [Brand Tasmania] were a key stakeholder […], we worked on the clarity of the brand positioning of Tasmania and Brand Tasmania and worked with key stakeholders throughout that process. We really opened up the dialogue and the discussion which was positive. But in terms of capacity, Tourism Tasmania is in a good position because it is well resourced as an industry within the master brand. Whereas others don't necessarily have that and the master brand does not have that (participant 15, in-depth interview).

> Brand Tasmania didn't really talk to Tourism Tasmania as they were separate government areas. Tourism Tasmania goes off and creates its tourism brand to the state, which doesn't really need too much to do with Brand Tasmania necessarily. It might do by default, but not by design (participant 18, in-depth interview).

The current stakeholder engagement strategy by TT is the result of a rebranding process that led to the 'Go Behind the Scenery' campaign.[339] In developing the new brand, TT initially worked with a cross-section of tourism operators to identify what it is that people who live in Tasmania find so special about the place (differentiating factor). TT did so by engaging widely with tourism operators around the state, which had an effect of improving motivation and allowing them to share their stories for the common good of the industry. The 2012-2015 TT strategic plan included two key strategies to highlight the importance of communicating with citizens to implement two domestic PR campaigns; and implement two major domestic integrated

[338] 'It was already observed in 2002 that the existing gap between what visitors want and what Tasmania offers is considerable. The challenge is to bridge this gap through brand management, industry development and communication strategies' (TT 2002, p. 5).

[339] For more information on the campaign, see www.tourismtasmania.com.au

marketing campaigns (Tourism Tasmania 2013).[340] In their 2015-2020 corporate plan, TT committed to 'engage and enlist stakeholders to support the brand', however, TT only lists government and industry as key stakeholders, and there is no sign of including them in decision-making on what the brand should be (Tourism Tasmania 2015).[341] TT conducted a series of 'stakeholder engagement surveys' with industry members (tourism operators and others) to measure satisfaction with the organisation's overall communications and engagement, and the results indicated greater engagement and communications with industry was needed to collectively deliver positive outcomes. (Tourism Tasmania 2016a).[342]

The focus on economic development and the lack of engagement arguably shows that Tasmania has developed its brand identity mainly from a consumer point of view, and the government has supported the leading role of the tourism industry in branding the space, due to its role in creating and delivering brand experiences. Local civil society seems largely ignored in strategising and decision-making in the process of branding Tasmania. The territory continues to be subject to changes to the brand, driven mostly by cultural and economic developments such as tourism, with the impact of MONA in Hobart as an example of a private major initiative affecting the brand of the state. As Eslake outlines, '[m]ore than anything, though, MONA has been Hobart's wave to ride', emphasising its capacity to attract high-end tourism and foster local development and 'unique' offering, but also to instigate 'vitality' or 'liveability' to the city and the state (Eslake in Salmon 2016).[343] Even the success of such private enterprises is supported by the local community, and '[t]he reason why it's working is because there's always been an underpinning, there's so many amazing artists, furniture makers, small scale growers that are here because they want to make their ideas work' (Moyle in Salmon 2016). As mentioned above MONA, in its planning stages, did not consider the public Tasmanian Brand in its own brand development, and see their relationship as instrumental, particularly when it comes to branding and its festivals:

> We didn't really think about Tasmania in relation to MONA and the MONA brand. But for the festival that carries the MONA brand, we absolutely went out and said 'this festival will change the

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[340] TT's corporate communications are undertaken using a range of channels including Tourism Talk, a bi-weekly newsletter, Industry Advisories, a series of email news notifications distributed to the select stakeholders, and through website publishing, RSS broadcasting and Twitter feeds. In addition, TT also maintains a corporate website whose primary audience is Tasmanian tourism businesses. TT also maintains a portal and range of social media for potential visitors with ample information about the state and its wonders (www.discovertasmania.com). Around 20 Industry Advisories are distributed yearly on topics including campaign launches, announcements from the CEO, Tasmanian Visitor Survey results, amd video messages to communicate news and announcements to stakeholders.

[341] See TT's 2012-13 annual report:<www.tourismtasmania.com.au/publications/annual_report/annual_report_2012-13/goal_4>, and TT's 2020-2025 Corporate Plan, <www.tourismtasmania.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/39957/Tourism-Tasmania-Corporate-Plan-2015-2020.pdf>.

[342] See, <www.tourismtasmania.com.au/publications/annual_report/annual_report_2012-13/goal_4>.

[343] 'Five years ago the acclaimed MONA opened on the outskirts of Hobart, in Glenorchy. Since then it has changed how Hobart is viewed both from within and without, and prompted the small capital to lift its game' (Salmon 2016).

> Hobart brand. It will change the perception of the city as a culturally forward-thinking place to live and be' (participant 16, in-depth interview)

In fact, the impact of MONA's brand on the Tasmanian brand has arguably been especially echoed in a recent TT's brand campaign, *Go Behind the Scenery*, exploring a series of unique and quirky Tasmanian experiences. An example of alignment of cultural and tourism brand is the partnership of TT and Dark MOFO in the 'Season of Curious' winter activation that presented 'brand aligned content' to increase visitation (Tourism Tasmania 2016b, p. 8).

Finally, COO branding (high-quality produce image) has proven quite separate from destination branding (at least in the quirkiness of recent campaigns) creating confusion about what Tasmania is or should be as illustrated by the quote below:

> Tourism have discovered recently that people travel to eat and drink, and food and beverage is a part of the tourism experience. Whereas before they used to just promote come and stay in this hotel and do this, do that, go to the museum but now they're understanding that you've got to actually promote experience, and that's good and that's exactly what we do as well. But because they're in that space, the visit space, we don't do much in that, we tend to say okay that's more than well-funded we'll stay out of that and let them do that (participant 22, in-depth interview)

Both TT and BT have struggled in their efforts to coordinate, communicate and engage their respective brands with locals and are starting to understand that often the success of branding, especially in the case of tourism branding or destination branding, depends on the support it receives from locals, as well as industry and other stakeholders: 'it was very frustrating that the Brand Council couldn't work as closely with Tourism Tasmania' (participant 14, in-depth interview). In light of the above, arguably Brand Tasmania has failed to develop a common identity and achieve the 'umbrella brand' status they strive to attain. Therefore, an all-encompassing more holistic place branding strategy is still needed:

> We have tried before and it requires political and industry leadership and agreement on that. I would talk about the master brand as the galaxy that is Tasmania, and we were one solar system which is tourism and we had lots of planets within ours, and the other solar systems are education, food and beverage, ICT, etc. It is kind of happening by default, but there needs to be a more strategic piece that brings all of those together in the same galaxy. Not to say they need to be completely interconnected, but they need to be part of a family. And they are. And it is happening by a way of osmosis as much as anything (participant 15, in-depth interview).

Other examples that demonstrate the need for branding to align more closely with what is happening locally in the state could support formal branding efforts. For instance, Tasmania's progressive stance on marriage equality (Williams 2012) is also defining its stand in the national scene. Since 2003, the state has adopted measures to distance itself from its homophobic recent past. It is often argued that community education on same-sex marriage, the environment movement, the Aboriginal movement, as well as unexpected global successes such as MONA have affected Tasmania's image as progressive, creative and innovative (Croome 2015), thus pushing the state to take either a conservative or progressive stance on the issues. Issues of equality and environmental protection such as these could have positioned the state as an example to be followed by other regions in Australia and oversea if they had been adopted as part of the branding efforts. Similarly, a controversy surrounding the sustainability of aquaculture industry because of a proposed expansion of salmon farming pens in the north-west of the state (Bolwell et al 2016b) could result in the next big environmental battle in the state. The government also continues embattled over ceasing or keeping old-growth forest logging in Tasmania's UNESCO World Heritage Area (Slezak 2016).

6.11 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the social, cultural, political and economic context in which the Tasmanian brand identity is co-created, often as the result of contestation and diverse interests. The chapter has provided an account of direct and indirect (formal and informal) branding strategies and their impact, as well as an indication of relationships between different stakeholders. The key features of the current place branding process are the fragmentation or lack of coordination among public and private sector branding and the lack of engagement with civil society actors outside the sectoral professionals. The analysis suggests the need for a holistic Tasmanian brand with an extended scope that includes the tourism and non-tourism sectors, including local residents. However, in order to include all stakeholders, it must follow a process of considered deliberation along the lines of Tasmania *Together*. The current branding of the state and the potential for greater alignment are further considered in discussion in Chapters Seven and Eight. Chapter Seven reports the data collected through the field research stages and analyses stakeholders' relationships, interactions and communication patterns in the co-creation of the brand identity of Tasmania.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DATA ANALYSIS

7.1 Introduction

As noted through the theory development section (Chapters Two to Four), I argue the need to explore the governance arrangements underlying place branding practices in order to enhance stakeholder participation and engagement in the process of co-creation of a place's identity. In this section, I analyse stakeholder interactions within the existing governance model of place branding in Tasmania through a series of in-depth interviews and focus group discussion with participants. In addition, in order to obtain in-depth understanding about how policy networks as superior governance arrangements could enable more participatory place branding processes, if at all, I conduct an active exploration of the applicability of an alternative participant-governed policy network model for place branding in a real setting. The information provided during the sociological interventions is further complemented and triangulated with data from the previous interviews and my own observations. As a result, I present a detailed illustration of the existing place branding process and the potential for an alternative model in Tasmania.

In this research I provide insights into potential avenues for operationalisation of participatory place branding by exploring alternative governance arrangements. As argued in the theory chapters, despite recent interest in stakeholder engagement, attempts to operationalise participatory place branding processes in the literature are scarce (Aitken & Campelo 2011; Hanna & Rowley 2011; Kavaratzis 2012; Lucarelli 2012; Warnaby 2009). The conclusion from my theoretical analysis was that in order to effect participatory place branding new methods and tools for managing and governing participation must be developed (Braun et al 2013; Kavaratzis 2012). I posited that policy networks as non-linear and open-ended structures could enhance the flexibility, adaptability and resilience required to manage the processes underlying the co-creation of place identities and brands. In short, the study of policy networks in the context of place branding can assist the further development of governance models towards participatory place branding.[344]

In this chapter I provide a thematic overview of the data collected during the fieldwork stages (refer to Table 3, p. 118), consisting of twenty-four initial in-depth semi-structured interviews, four focus groups discussions exploring current practices in Tasmania, and three focus group interventions where the applicability of an alternative participant-governed network model for

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[344] Recognising the importance of further attempts to investigate applications of participatory place branding, this research looks at particular governance arrangements, policy networks, as tools for place branding. Other researchers, like Jernsand and Kraff (2014), following the research trend on participatory practices, are looking into other fields, like urban planning, for tools like participatory design.

Tasmania was discussed. The design also includes three additional in-depth interviews where I discuss the applicability of the alternative model with participants that were interviewed in the first round of in-depth interviews, were unable to attend the focus group discussions and interventions, but agreed to share their thoughts on the alternative model through an additional interview.

The chapter is divided in two main sections. In the first section I outline and analyse participants' confusion with regards to the terminology in use and I present participants' accounts of their place branding practice and processes. Subsequently I provide an analysis of the current branding process and its structure in Tasmania. In the second section I examine participants' insights from a series of interventions discussing the potential application of an alternative participant-governed network model to the branding of Tasmania. Following the analysis, I discuss the main findings of this research in Chapter Eight. Finally, in Chapter Nine I present my conclusions.

7.2 The branding discourse

As introduced earlier, the analysis of participants' accounts of the branding process showed an interesting array of various conceptualisations of place image, identity and reputation of places (Brown et al 2006). These discrepancies inevitably lead to miscommunication in practice, and competing strategies and positioning between the different stakeholder groups. Upon a review of the literature, I anticipated the difficulties associated to the lack of clear conceptual framework in both place branding theory and practice. I then decided to employ a *neutral* concept to avoid confusion when referring to the place branding process: *putting places on the map*. The intention was not to introduce a new terminology or concept, but rather to allow participants to feel free to use the terms and concepts they felt most at ease with, or those that better reflected their practices. The concepts and terms mentioned in the interviews included: place branding, place marketing, place making, destination branding, place brand, city brand, *putting places on the map*, reputation, image, identity and place brand. These terms were related to a range of different disciplines and to other notions (i.e. advertising, community and economic development, marketing, society and so forth), and consequently were influenced by different discourses and carried different meanings, shaping actions and perceptions through discourse.

In this sense, it is therefore important to observe how participants' brand attitudes and understandings of place form (Merrilees et al 2009). Accordingly, the differences start in the understanding of brands and their potential role in managing the identities and reputations of places. In an attempt to clarify the purpose of this research and bring clarity to what is understood as the place branding process in this research to stakeholders, as stated in the Chapter Five in the description of the research design, I decided to introduce the phrase 'put a place on the map' to refer to 'place branding' practices. The aim was to avoid influencing participants. However, as has been introduced throughout the sections above, participants reported diverse understandings of the branding process, its purposes and its potential outcomes through their choice of terminology. The example below reflects the attempt by a government representative to define 'putting places on the map'.

> Participant 11: The difficulty with brand always is that it turns into a marketing thing, and if you are not a marketing person you don't understand brand, because you think is a logo or a slogan. You can talk to a Tasmanian about branding […] and you know they don't understand a thing you said or they misunderstand from their lens. If you tell them […] 'it is about our reputation' […] from a tourism perspective, not an exporter one, the reputation is not your experience or the product you sell, it is my consumption of that is not whether I believe you or not. The marketing is just a tool. So your brand lives here, and for tourism the brand lives in the community, full stop.
>
> All: Yeah [in agreement].
>
> Participant 7: But then also, we don't have a 'b' word discussion. You have a discussion about the communities' reputations and what you stand for. It is a completely different discussion. […] And the community protects their reputation as Tasmanians always do (focus group I).

For instance, participants belonging to civil society (and NGOs) reported a lack of understanding of the particularities and purpose of branding, although they understood the place branding process as a tool for economic development and a set of strategies created and supported by formal branding organisations. They were concerned with the need to maintain a true identity and sense of place (Campelo 2015; Kalandides 2011a; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2015; Massey 1994). Quite often, their approach towards communicating about the place was understood not only as their everyday role and interactions with tourists and the media (in their ambassador role, see Andersson & Ekman 2009), but also as the means through which they define themselves and create a sense of community.[345]

Participants account and their different understandings of place branding were reflective of the disconnect between formal place making and the logic of societal development and organisation. Those participants in the public and private sectors, that engage in formal and semi-formal branding attempts argued that place branding is aimed at selling products or services from the place (exports, tourism, tertiary education, etc.), and thus supports economic development through marketing or advertising campaigns to sell local products and experiences based on a static set of attributes.

As evidenced by the quotation above, even through their explanations of their process of place branding, participants used interchangeably concepts like brand, reputation, identity and recognition, which obviously can convey quite distinct ideas and meanings:

> There are two elements. The initial part of the journey creating an identity, recognition, the brand or putting it on the map. […] And where are we going with that. Because there is real recognition

[345] More aligned with place making, see Sampson and Goodrick (2009).

> within the council and the community about the need to figure out ‘how we put this place on the map’. The brand of the region, the reputation. What is reputation? And some of that is enacting reputation. (participant 11, focus group 1).

Participants also noted two main understandings of branding: as an internal communication tool (public diplomacy or national building); or as a consumer-driven marketing and branding tool. Marketers, for instance, mentioned the term nation branding when referring to internal image building (territorial). As highlighted in the quote below, the term ‘nation’ is here used in a regional context:

> So predominantly much of what we were doing was nation branding, we didn’t do much supply side at all (participant 7, focus group I)

However, those in the public sector often understood place branding (or *putting places on the map*) as a place development activity as per the quote below:

> But it is how we can support those passionate people in the community to actually take that leadership role to move forward and actually create some change. And that is how we are putting Tasmania on the map (participant 11, focus group 1).

Similarly, when considering the issue of place reputation, participants focused on the need to engage communication professionals to train newer stakeholder. They understood place branding as a public relations activity, where communication strategies are decided top-down in closed doors:

> Participant 11: We have now a full time communication person as staff.
> Participant 3: Excellent.
> Participant 11: And it is now part of her role high-level really key messages of reputation and brand […] to work across all of the sectors (focus group 1).

Sadly, instead of focusing on communicating in and from ‘informal’ networks of communication, as well as facilitating community engagement through social networks, the public sector devotes financial resources to engage professionals and consultants to fabricate ‘identities’ of places to support positive reputations.

Participants also discussed the expertise needed to conduct place branding. Examples include communications expert role, and a comparison of roles in the public and private sector to argue that, in the private sectors:

> It was that stakeholder relationship, it was about what we did, it was about building the image and knowledge of the organisation, whereas with local government it is about that broader identity and brand of the area. And we are going with it because it is so important to get it right. Because that shapes the future. Once again, communication, information but with a slightly different focus: strategic and economic development (participant 11, focus group I).

Similarly, participants linked economic development and brand identity building:

> We have an economic development officer but he can't go around and tap someone else's shoulder and say "excuse me, what would you like us to do with development?" They are very reactive. They can be proactive to a certain extent but we need to say this place is open to business and it is about how we do it as well (participant 11, focus group I).

An analysis of participants' insights clearly shows that those with business backgrounds not only favour a model more inclined to support top-down arrangements that support the *status quo,* but also display a higher sense of 'entitlement' to be leading place branding processes as tools for economic development. This is also perhaps due to the stakes they have in place. This corresponds with Braun et al's (2013) reflections on the different perceptions on the task to argue that various stakeholders have different understandings of what place branding means, as well as different expectations about place brand performance. Participants representing civil society, however, reported a perceived lack of understanding of the branding process, and quite often an approach towards communicating about the place quite differing quite heavily from formal branding attempts. As Merrilees et al (2009) argue, there is a further need to understand how brand attitudes form.

Even though it is out of the scope for this dissertation to analyse the terminology used by participants (for a review of terminology use in place branding, see Hanna & Rowley 2008), the very fact that participants presented different understandings validates in itself the need for an open dialogue about what branding means and brings to places and how the process of branding inherently relies on stakeholder interactions and information sharing to support common purposes or practices. In fact, 'place branding' is arguably too instrumental a term to describe what fully needs to take place to support a positive reputation for a place based on a strong place identity co-created and supported by a greater number of stakeholders.

Tasmania's branding practices: stakeholder perceptions of the state-of-the-art

The first part of this chapter outlines participants' accounts of Tasmania's formal and informal approach to branding. The account includes their motivations, the current structures underlying (mainly hierarchical and government-led) Tasmania's place branding process, the issues they encountered and their perceived (or lack of) success. The aim of this section is to highlight the existing patterns of interaction and underlying communication dynamics, along with other matters affecting stakeholder engagement in the process of branding Tasmania. The findings are divided into six main areas following the main lines of questioning of the in-depth interviews (see Appendix Five for a sample of the interview guide). Each area is further divided into emerging themes arising from the interviews and discussions. The emerging themes are then further classified in subthemes and organised by stakeholder group (refer to Table 7 below)[346].

[346] This table serves as a visual representation of the themes that are further explored and supported by quotations illustrating them through the analysis presented in the sections to follow.

LINES OF QUESTIONING	EMERGING THEMES	ACTORS AND/OR SUBTHEMES
Motivations to brand Tasmania	Regional development	Place branding as a tool for economic development
	Destination branding	Tourism Tasmania
	Country-of-origin branding	Brand Tasmania
	Environmental movement	Citizen branding
Approach taken to brand Tasmania	Formal approaches	Role of Government
		Role of public and private organisations
	Informal approaches	The role of the media
		Role of brand activism: environmental concern
	Time horizon	Long-term vs short term
Stakeholder engagement in the process of place branding	Consultative processes	Engagement vs lip service
	Civil society engagement	The role of locals or residents
	Other forms of collaboration	*Tasmania Together
Issues encountered during strategic and implementation phases of the process of branding Tasmania	Contextual: particular to the socioeconomic characteristics of Tasmania	North and South divide
		Sense of apathy towards change
		Self-interest for survival
	Cultural issues: related to the cultures of collaboration and engagement in Tasmania	Lack of communication and knowledge sharing between stakeholders
		Lack of culture of collaboration across public, private and voluntary sectors
		Leadership, power and authority
	Structural: related to the current top-down hierarchical approach to branding Tasmania	Hierarchical, government-dominated strategic planning process
		Multiplicity of stakeholders
Resources available to brand Tasmania	Public resources	Financial
	Private resources	Knowledge-related
	Non-financial resources	Social capital
Expected and real outcomes of the different approaches to branding Tasmania	Successes	Branding for a specific purpose or specific industry (COO or destination branding)
	Failures	The need for an umbrella brand

Table 7. Outline of Findings of the In-Depth Interviews by Emerging Themes (Author's own).

The section includes data collected through the eighteen in-depth interviews and four focus groups discussions concerning participants' experiences related to their attempts to formally or informally branding Tasmania. The aim is to describe and contextualise existing place branding practices, particularly in a regional setting, along with providing the context for the sociological interventions where an alternative model for branding Tasmania was discussed by participants.

7.3 Motivations to engage in place branding in Tasmania

The majority of participants acknowledged regional economic development as the main motivation for establishing a regional brand for Tasmania. They noted that in Tasmania the branding exercise often responds to the particularities of the state's economic climate.[347] Some of the specific objectives identified by participants included: improving the business climate, assisting with industry development, attracting visitors (linked to destination branding strategies), attracting skilled migrants and international students and increasing exports of products and services (linked to COO branding). Other motivations included increasing national and international reputation (mainly government attempts, but also the focus of private NGOs and regional bodies, as well as ICT communities, all attempting to establish themselves as industry leaders), developing cultural and creative industries (arts and tertiary education) and increasing regional civic pride (mainly linked to destination branding strategies for tourism and the role of residents as ambassadors). For those participants with public sector backgrounds the place branding process was seen as a blueprint for economic development, noting that, in the public sector, processes of image building carry further consequences. Under this view, they argued that place branding processes should not be managed by marketers, but rather by economic development departments at a macro level. This technical-economical view of the place branding process has implications for stakeholder engagement, since it places the interests of government above those of other stakeholders as illustrated by the quote below:

> That [business] stakeholder relationship was about building the image and knowledge of the organisation [… whereas] with local government it is about the broader identity and brand of the area. And it is so important to get it right, because that shapes the future. Once again, communication, information but with a slightly different focus: strategic and economic development. We have an economic development officer but he can't go around and tap someone else's shoulder and say 'excuse me, what would you like us to do with development'? They [residents] are very reactive. They can be proactive to a certain extent but we need to say this place is open to business (participant 11, focus group I).

[347] Tasmania's economy is discussed in Chapter Five, pp. 138-142.

Among the motivations to branding the state participants noted the most salient were: to increase visitation (as seen in the quote below); increase exports; respond to a great opportunity for development. As one participant stated:

> So, in other words what we are concerned about primarily, number 1, bring people here (participant 6, focus group III).

Branding efforts in this context are instrumental, in that they act as mere promotional campaigns targeted at different consumer groups for short-term purposes:

> Brand is not what you said it is but what they say it is. The people that are buying from you or visiting you or looking at you. Don't make it an internal decision, make it based on them (participant 22, in-depth interview).

Discussion: Destination and COO branding practices are the dominant approaches in the state although these seem to be operating in silos. Place of origin (Schultz 1996) or COO branding is focused on increasing the exports of quality goods and services and works in isolation (industry-skilled board) whereas the destination branding network understands the need to further develop consistent communication strategies and collaborative processes for effective delivery of place brand messages. The Tasmanian case illustrates traditional hierarchical government-led structures of decision-making focused on enhancing tourism and investment (Kotler et al 1993). This traditional approach based on targeted marketing campaigns has proven instrumental since, as argued through Chapter Six, often results in conflict between public branding and informal civil society-led branding. The motivations outlined here are further explored and linked to the different approaches to branding the state in the next section.[348]

7.4 Approach taken to branding Tasmania

The different approaches to branding the state outlined by participants are divided into formal (public and private) and informal (civil society) attempts to brand the state. Following their account of their motivations to brand Tasmania participants identified public attempts by government, tourism agencies (mostly government-funded) and marketing bodies such as Brand Tasmania (fully government funded) as the main drivers of the brand. Branding efforts were mainly clustered into 'business marketing' (closely linked to country-of-origin branding, related to investment and trade), 'tourism marketing' (or destination branding) and 'other forms of branding', including attempts to frame the place's identity by civil society and the media.

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[348] Service is defined here as 'the application of specialised competences (knowledge and skills), through deeds, processes, and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself' (Vargo & Lusch 2004, p. 2). See also Lusch and Vargo (2014).

7.4.1 Formal approaches to branding the state

This section reviews government and public, as well as private branding strategies and campaigns to brand Tasmania.

a. The role of government in place branding processes in Tasmania

Since most financial resources are in the public sector, the Tasmanian government has traditionally adopted a leading decision-making role in the process of place branding. Participants' suggested that the greater involvement and leadership role of government has determined a hierarchical top-down structure to branding the state which is highly dependent on the political cycle and election promises. Participants also highlighted government's gatekeeping role and risk averse nature (for fear of political and media backlash), alongside a lack of long-term planning in their policies due to short political terms:

> It is resources, and it is political cycle. The current government came in and its mode of operating is: it announces a to-do-list of 100 items and it is only going to do these things (participant 17, focus group III).
>
> I think investment wasn't fully realised because a lot of the opportunities and the networks that were generated were then not captured, and I did ask for support for that but it was a kind of gatekeeper issue (participant 20, in-depth interview).[349]

Remarkably, participants from the public sector noted that government branding practices are now transitioning from a decision-making to a facilitating role. For instance, due to a perceived lack of expertise and human resources, governments have recognised the need to collaborate with other organisations:

> Council as a rule in the last two years has made a very conscious decision to say 'our role in these bigger events is to make sure that we are a sponsor and facilitator' (participant 24, focus group III).[350]
>
> Participant 2: The tourism Minister isn't necessarily a tourism specialist, you know.
>
> Participant 23: And he shouldn't be, probably.
>
> Participant 2: Or is someone who's had experience but… (focus group IV)

Government's role is often also understood in processes of collaboration in terms of a

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[349] Participant 20 further elaborated on the gatekeeping issue and added that it is a *cultural* (endemic) element in governance: 'I think it comes back to gatekeeper issues, so I do think that personal people at the top, the leadership team, their ownership and the kind of advocacy and support for the concept is vital, partly because that determines whether resources are attached or not, but also means that they then go out and they are ambassadors for the project. But I also think is a whole of a system, because every system has a range of gatekeepers and gatekeepers can facilitate or they can block, and they can offer a blockage at a low level in a small way, like a middle-management or even an operational blockage, can be very damaging, even if the people at the top are or think they are fully supportive. […] It's kind of a cultural problem, and if we are talking about Tasmania as a whole, that is a big problem for Tasmania, it is a really catch 22, so to change the culture you have to unblock the blockages, but the people who are most emotionally and psychologically invested in things not changing are the people who maintain the blockages.'

[350] In the context of this quote, events were considered as part of the branding strategy for places (see Florek 2009).

'referee/control body', whose task is to hold the organisations or stakeholder groups involved in place branding accountable for sharing knowledge and collaborating. This 'controlling' role is justified as a means to enhance trust based on high accountability within stakeholders:

> The only way to control them [place brand agencies] at all is to have them in government. The closer they are to government, the more they are forced to share. The further they drift out, the more they don't communicate. Especially not so much events but tourism. Its inability to explain the roles of Tourism Tasmania, individual organisations, or Regional Tourism Organisations. […] You have these two groups Tourism Tasmania and industry, and the industry yelling back about this so-called gap in communication (participant 6, focus group III).

b. Formal organisations: destination branding and COO branding

Since the government is currently focused on increasing tourism to support the local economy, the focus on the destination brand based on the state's offering has resulted in a shift to a quirkier set of attributes, that responds to the current creative landscape.

> Tourism has more weight for two reasons. The first is for people who aren't from Tasmania […] It's the lens through which they get the first insight into it. Secondly, whereas in the past our tourism experience was primarily the wilderness, it's now got a number of equal layers. The wilderness, the food and beverage, the quirky arts, seen from MONA, the historic heritage, the events. A lot of that is about bringing people here, then have one of those experiences, then go back and then not only have they said to other people come to visit, but they go back and buy the food (participant 17, in-depth interview).

***Discussion*:** The approach to branding that Tasmania's public agencies adopt for the state follows an economic development-logic for instrumental purposes (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Medway et al 2015). In Tasmania, place branding practices have been led by COO branding based on high-quality produce and products since the government's formal adoption of place branding practices in 1990. In the last five to ten years, however, a boom in the tourism industry has resulted in the destination brand gaining ground on the COO brand and leading government strategies to position the state, as well as acting as an umbrella brand (Iversen & Hem 2008). In addition, the lack of dependability on the political cycle that hinders sustainable place branding practices (Zouganeli et al 2012). Finally, the influence of private branding attempts is evidenced by allusions to MONA and Federal group's brands during the interviews. Anecdotally, these two private brands influencing the state's strategies have a marketing budget significantly larger than the state's. Although this might seem at odds with the traditional role of the state government as funder of branding campaigns, it is important to understand the context and financial resources of the newcomer MONA and the tradition of Federal Group as major employer for the state (after state government).

7.4.2 Informal approaches to branding Tasmania

a. The role of the media

> *Should the media be at the heart of it? They are critical stakeholders in the on-going socialisation of it but not at the development of it would be my view I think.*
>
> *(participant 15, in-depth interview)*

Participants noted the critical role of the media in the process of disseminating the messages that form place branding campaigns:

> A lot of the VJP[351] for Tourism Tasmania went outside the realms of just tourism. I loved it because that is the brand. The visiting journalists wrote about the cleanliness of the air and the access to the pristine environment and all these other things which is ultimately brand Tasmania (participant 15, in-depth interview).[352]

The role of media expands from mediating formal branding messages to building sense of place. Participants noted that media helped to build local pride and bring stakeholders together to debate issues that affect the Tasmanian society:

> We use the media basically. If it is very important that we keep public awareness around the project and where it is at and how it is going (participant 10, in-depth interview).
>
> Teach your own people to love your place and they'll be your ambassadors (participant 10, in-depth interview)

Participants also noted the sensationalist character of some media outlets and the difficulties associated to controlling media messages. Participants working in the public sector, in particular, were concerned with the impact of place reputation of media accounts:

> All the news articles were horrible, and they still are atrocious (participant 1, in-depth interview).
>
> The media has to be sensational, they have to sell (participant 14, in-depth interview).[353]
>
> Nearly every morning when I turn on my radio I hear, firstly how stupid we are because we haven't finished year Ten or year Twelve[354] and then how poor the economy is. I hear so much negative stuff that I actually think that is very hard for a lot of Tasmanians to put their head up. But we are fantastic and we have this fabulous place. For somebody who is not driven by education, passion

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[351] For more on the Visiting Journalists Program see Chapter Five, p. 153.

[352] Media also has an impact in the branding of private organisations as evidence in this quote: 'the university has been pushed to actually start to engage and get better engagement. The media has a role in playing in terms of the messaging what is coming out' (participant 4, focus group IV).

[353] Participants in the public sector further emphasised a sometimes 'disrupting role' of media: 'We have heaps of community groups that we engage with, so from time to time, the different community groups might think we do a fantastic job, but what undoes it is the local media. It is easy for the local paper to pick for a front-page story something that government has stuffed up. But if you did a count on the number of bad news stories about government compared to the good news stories about government in the local newspapers, there wouldn't be even (participant 24, in-depth interview).

[354] Under the Australian Education system, primary and secondary school are compulsory. Primary school runs for seven or eitght years starting at Kindergarten (ages three to five) through to year Six or Seven (ages six to twelve). Secondary school then runs for three or four years, from year seven to ten (ages thirteen to sixteen). Finally, secondary school runs for two years, year eleven and twelve (ages seventeen and eighteen). For more information, see <https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/australian-education/education-system>.

or enthusiasm to actually think: "how can I put my head up and shine here when I am being pushed down all the time". I think that is tricky (participant 10, in-depth interview).

Those in the tourism industry, however, argued that the industry is riding a *purple patch*[355] and media has a positive role in amplifying the industry's successes and accolades:

> I think the media play a fundamental role in encouraging, celebrating, living the brand of our people, of the Tasmanian community. I feel as though that cannot be underestimated. Dialling up what's good about what we are (participant 15, post in-depth interview).[356]

b. Brand activism

As argued through Chapter Five, the environmental battles to protect Tasmania's natural resources have resulted in informal branding attempts that have impacted and shaped Tasmania's reputation, nationally and internationally. The quote below notes a recognition of the role of environmental conflict in Tasmania's branding:

> That industry [forestry] and its impact on our state from an environmental perspective but equally from a perspective of what it would do to the cost of our road infrastructure and the burden it would place on locals and thirdly the impact on our tourism industry, experience and particularly the brand (participant 10, in-depth interview).

Surprisingly, some participants formally engaged in branding Tasmania (in the public sector), however, argued that environmental protests, campaigns or contested brand messages about the environment did not alter Tasmania's COO brand, primarily based on high quality produce, as per the quote below:

> Actually it was getting stronger and we weren't able to prove that but it was getting stronger as Australians were becoming more affluent and were more appreciative of high quality food. A bit later on again there was another opportunity once again caused by an environmental [issue], the Pulp Mill, and there were all sorts of protests happening in Sydney and Melbourne and we ran another research in both those places and the brand was even stronger and these protesters that were saying 'Tasmania is ripping out its' forests' weren't affecting the brand at all, it had such strength and good health that it wasn't an issue (participant 22, in-depth interview).

A view that was disputed by other participants in the public sector who actually expressed concern about the influence of alternative discourses in place branding practices in Tasmania:

> I guess we weren't hurt so much by the conflicts… We were very worried about the risk of the forestry war starting up again, not only for tourism but for our food and beverage products and forestry products (participant 17, in-depth interview).

Finally, participants with private sector or civil society backgrounds expressed concern about the environmental impact of the state's current economic model aimed at increasing visitation by

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355 See Chapter Five, and Grimmer (2016).

356 Proof the good relationship that tourism organisations have with the media is Tourism Tasmania and Brand Tasmania's VJPs were described by one participants: 'there was a strategy to go around and brief the media to help leverage their writing good stories about it making people aware of what was going on' (participant 17, in-depth interview). For more information, see <http://www.tourismtasmania.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/17063/Services.pdf> and <http://www.brandtasmania.com/partners/>.

promoting a 'clean and green' image of Tasmania. Participants reported efforts to protect the island's pristine environment by purposely leaving it 'off the map':

> There is the counter-movement out there of people who are kind of putting Tasmania on the map but they are actually saying let's just leave it off the map. Because at the moment everybody's scrambling to be on the map and why not be something a little bit different? Our time will come or might even come sooner than you want (participant 13 focus group IV).

Discussion: Inevitably, formal government branding has been challenged by informal branding by stakeholders in Tasmania, in particular media and citizens through social movements. As Ooi argues using the example of Singapore, while authorities try to reimage and brand to effect positive reputations 'there are other sources of information that challenge the rosy picture' (2008, p. 295). The findings prove that contested messages are part of the branding exercise and should be taken into account in the process. In particular, participants engaged in destination branding acknowledged that the experience promised by the tourism brand is delivered by a range of stakeholders, highlighting citizens' key role as ambassadors for the place, following a service-dominant marketing logic (Vargo & Lusch 2004, 2008).[357]

Notably, participants in the public sector presented divergent opinions with regards to the effects of environmentalism in the state's branding campaigns. I argue that the perceived success and untouchability of the state's brand for some points towards underlying power issues and a general sense of comfort in the status quo of those in the public sector, despite a lack of unyielding measurement frameworks to demonstrate their perceived success.

7.4.3 Time horizon informing practice: quick fix or long-term plan

Brand is not an advertising campaign. It's not even a PR campaign. It's much deeper than that […] it's much more longitudinal. It's much more difficult to change.

(participant 15, post in-depth interview)

The majority of participants indicated a lack of integrated strategic planning or collaborative models underpinning their branding processes, as highlighted by this example: 'Brand Tasmania doesn't really work to time frames, just chugs away' (participant 17, in-depth interview). As indicated above, most participants followed a pragmatic approach to branding the state based on specific outcomes or interests. From a tourism marketing perspective, for instance, participants argued that shorter term strategies respond better to the constant changes in ICT and consumer trends:

> It was more 5 years... In marketing, our communication channels have changed immeasurably in the last 5 years. And I think if you look out too far beyond, your crystal ball is hazy. Let's look at

[357] A further analysis of the implications of the different approaches for the understanding of the task, related to their particular use and understanding of some terminologies to refer to the phenomenon of place branding is included in the second half of the chapter.

> what we know now and focus on that. And certainly, when the marketing strategy was put together, this whole digital space was put in there, but wasn't even dreamt of before (participant 14, in-depth interview).

Participants also highlighted the influence of the political electoral cycle in their strategic cycles: 'that was medium term. We had a 10-year vision about what to try to do, working to a plan for 5 years to get that way, then initiatives over 1 to 2 years (participant 17, in-depth interview).[358] Despite the rather short time horizon informing practice, most participants recognised the need to engage in longer-term planning for effective place branding practices, noting that only a sustainable effort for a common purpose will enhance a solid and positive reputation for the place:

> Long term strategy is impossible. It needs to be taken away from the government and become a bipartisan support for something that's longer term than just an election cycle (participant 18, in-depth interview).
>
> I think about changing the frame. Thinking and talking about Tasmania is a very long term process. It's not an immediate thing and it is not just one book, or one intervention, or one invention that does that. It is something that needs to be sustained (participant 20, in-depth interview).
>
> Positioning Tasmania as a leader in digital and innovation and technology is a much longer term thing […] I think what Tasmania should definitely be doing, is coming up with a 20-year plan for getting us to a point where we are doing very well in this area. (participant 9, in-depth interview).
>
> And what you want is long term sustainability (participant 14, in-depth interview).

Discussion: Despite a lack of long-term planning across the board in Tasmania, fuelled by constraints to developing holistic models for public policy due to the short-term political cycle, participants recognised that long-term engagement was needed to ensure effective place branding practices (Gilmore 2002; Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013).

7.5 Review of stakeholder engagement in the process of place branding

Whether you go to bubble model or do a bubble model on each project as it happens, that doesn't get communicated and people don't know where to engage. […] And there is just nobody out there explaining how it works.[359]

(participant 14, focus group I)

Participants indicated that consultative processes involving a wide range of stakeholders had critical importance for three main reasons: for information gathering that would inform branding

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[358] The short-term character of branding plans and strategies was noted at both regional and local and state government planning as indicated by the following participant: '[U]nder the Local Government Act, the council has to have a strategic plan every 5 years, what we found though is that in the context of the assets we manage it is meaningless 5 years' (participant 24, in-depth interview).

[359] Participant 14 introduced a hand written diagram of his own understanding of a non-hierarchical network model that in the bubble model of decision-making for place-making there is no predetermined leading role, and that all stakeholders co-decide on issues that affect the development on the place. Power and authority are equally shared among stakeholders. Different stakeholders take a leading role at different times on the cycle, according to the specific actions agreed upon by the group of stakeholders. The model was not elaborated further and I was not able to find any more detailed information about the model. However, it does appear to contain elements of a network-based approach.

strategies (especially in tourism); as a public diplomacy tool to inform citizens of such strategies; and to enhance *public* validation of such strategic choices (an approach observed in the government approach, since state institutions are subject to higher public scrutiny).[360] However, some participants were especially cynical towards this form of consultation claiming a real engagement. In fact, those representing the business community, members of civil society and NGOs labelled consultation processes as purely paying 'lip service' to an already devised branding plan. Participants argued that further stakeholder engagement is needed, particularly in decision-making stages.

Furthermore, participants stressed that the different branding bodies rarely collaborated in co-creating or aligning brandings strategies, often leading to contested branding messages.

7.5.1 Consultative processes: engagement or lip service?

> *[O]bviously as a local government we have lots of different avenues of engagement with various parts of the community, so there are lots of ways in which Council can engage with the community, which can be problematic.*
>
> *(participant 24, focus group III)*

Participants noted that governments and public agencies engage in the widespread practice of engaging professional bureaus (consulting and marketing firms) to assist in brand development strategies, as noted in the quote below:

> We are just in the process of engaging a consultant to help us develop a new brand for the city. The city marketing unit is in charge of that process. And yes, definitely we do [engage consultants]. It is not something that we develop ourselves (participant 24, in-depth interview)

They indicated that this might be due to governments' lack of branding expertise and human resources in the area. I noted that the term 'consultation' was in fact interpreted differently by participants, although it was mostly conceived as a process of information seeking and validation which points towards a real lack of engagement (Arnstein 1969). As highlighted in the quote below, participants were torn between their strong views on the benefits of engagement and their acknowledgement of the complex nature of interest negotiation and strategy formulation for common purposes:

> I think sometimes it's information sharing, sometimes it's true engagement where you do actually collect people's input because you want to understand whether you're on the right track or not and give people notice. And sometimes consultation is just information sharing and that's all it needs to be. I think there's four or five different steps. Sometimes decisions have to be made and people just need to be informed (participant 8, focus group IV).[361]

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[360] According to the literature on place branding, stakeholders include: government officials, politicians, business, residents and visitors. See, for instance, Fan (2010), Moilanen and Rainisto (2009).

[361] '[O]ften government does engage but the way it engages is a focus group before they make a decision so they capture some information. The interpretation of that information happens in a locked room somewhere. They come up

> [The engagement strategy] would not have been successful if we hadn't taken that model of consultation. We wouldn't have succeeded because it would have been perceived as again another piece of work that was done in an ivory tower behind closed doors when in fact all of the people participating needed the answers. They needed the answers better than we did. So, why not engage them and allow them to contribute? (participant 15, in-depth interview).

In some instances, participants also highlighted consultation as attempts by government to detach responsibility from decision-making, especially when dealing with complex issues:

> Sometimes governments engage consultants because they don't want to be seen to be making decisions themselves, and quite often what they do is to engage a consultant, tell the consultant what they want the consultant to find, and then the consultant goes out and finds it. Then they can say 'the consultant made the decision' to do what they're going to do, which is a bit of a worry (participant 18, in-depth interview).[362]

Participants with public sector backgrounds, however, argued that the role of consultants should be to facilitate research or to assist the writing of strategies and documents. They stressed that consultants simply carried out a brand assessment or developed specific campaigns to enhance the place image following specific objectives and agendas.[363]

> Participant 4: They[consultants] have got depth of expertise in doing exactly what we're trying to do and they're not down here to write a report and tell us 'here are your milestones, go off and execute this'. They're helping us to execute. That's a very different thing but a really crucial principle for us. That project is it's not about hiring in consultants to deliver this thing in the long term. That consultant is building local capacity so teaching people locally how to do things.
>
> Participant 8: It's facilitation (focus group IV).

Those participants from non-public sectors, on the contrary, engaged in a deep critique of consultative processes. They argued that decision-making happens mostly behind closed doors, and that most research reports remain underutilised. They also noted that the knowledge generated could be shared and then report immediate benefits to other stakeholders. Similarly, they indicated that consultative processes are often aimed to bring stakeholders on board with pre-designed place branding strategies:

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with a plan or a report or something that's distilled from that information and then they execute that plan or they release that plan for feedback on the plan and that sort of thing. And I guess what I would argue is that that's not engagement because in fact there's not kind of a constant thread of engagement through the process. And I think that's where people start to become disenfranchised. People don't necessarily feel ownership of the thing that comes out the other side. For me the key thing is that there's no creative import. It's actually that you're mining information and then you're doing the creativity somewhere else and then you're coming out with something else. And I think if people wanted to be engaged, what they actually want to do is provide ideas, provide kind of input'
(participant 9, focus group IV)

[362] This is supported by other quotes emphasising government's aversion to open public debate for fear of backlash as one participant notes: 'sometimes I think they [government] are scared to have these conversations. It doesn't work that well. (participant 11, in-depth interview)

[363] The specific marketing efforts preceding and following the visit of the Chinese President to the state in late November 2015 aimed to increase foreign trade and inbound Chinese visitation, constitute an example of such practices.

> A lot of strategies are done behind closed doors. They are written and then everyone just lives by it. But to get the buy-in, especially when creating community change, the community has got to own it, and sometimes those organisations actually have to let go of what can happen in that, because the community's asking for something different (participant 1, in-depth interview).

> Linked to a number of reports sitting on your filing cabinet that no one ever reads and they have costed an exorbitant amount of money to produce, so let alone implementation […] the key is that it is a co-participation model in terms of the development of the work, but most importantly we then take the work, own the work, it is ours, and then implement it in a way (participant 15, in-depth interview)

7.5.2 Civil society engagement and other forms of collaboration

According to participants, the scope for stakeholder participation in strategic processes about the management and development of brand Tasmania was limited. In particular, civil society was mainly disengaged with the exception of the community building process of Tasmania *Together*.[364] Although there were different views on to what extent it should happen, participants agreed on the need to engage local residents. They referred to civic involvement in the branding process as 'grass-roots support'. Residents, those in the public sector argued, have a secondary role and are generally not considered in decision-making processes:

> To have a reason to make people believe in Tasmania for either wine, tourism or whatever, you have to have the locals believing on it first. There has to be grass-roots support (participant 14, focus group I)

For those in government, residents' participation was limited to their role as ambassadors for the place in charge of delivering the (promised) place experience. Those representing civil society, however, noted that residents are seldom informed about branding strategies.

> It was just a matter of taking people on that journey and building our pride (participant 14, in-depth interview).

> The community is not asked and it is not told. If someone's walking up and down the main street of Launceston there's no one from Brand Tasmania to tell them what they're going to see, they'll walk into a shop and they'll experience the brand, good or bad (participant 1, in-depth interview).

***Discussion**:* The reported degrees of participation in Tasmania would correspond to the lower to middle levels of Arnstein's ladder of participation model, namely: manipulation and therapy in consultation processes; and different 'degrees of tokenism' to earn buy-in (1969, p. 217).[365] In the process of strategic decision-making about place branding, consultation was therefore regarded as a key tool for designing the branding strategies, although it had mostly an informative

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[364] Tasmania *Together* was a formal process of participation set up by the Tasmanian government in an attempt to establish a sustained consultative process that will inform policy. The project was widely supported by the community despite its subsequent demise due to a lack of public funding as a result of changes of government priorities (See Chapter Five, pp. 156-158).

[365] For more detail on Arnstein's ladder of participation see Chapter Four, p.87.

status and scarce follow-up in terms of reporting and influencing decision-making.

Participants supported more democratic processes that allow greater stakeholder involvement in issues of place development, stressing that 'a key reason of failure [of place branding strategies] is the absence of a programme for engaging and energising local people, businesses and community groups in shaping, articulating and conveying the brand' (Houghton & Stevens 2011, p. 45). Those participants that are traditionally left out in the decision-making stages, however, were cynical about engagement. They argued that, even when consulted, their opinions were seldom valued or actioned. This supports Aitken and Campelo's argument that the involvement of residents is key to maintain the 'authenticity, recognition, acceptance and commitment by the local community' (2011, p. 918) to the brand and such involvement 'will lead to increased ownership of the brand and therefore more sense of responsibility for its development, management and external reputation' (Braun et al 2013, p. 21).

The findings link back to the literature that suggests that place branding processes have to be 'resident orientated', since place branding is too often 'a linear process of managerial decision making' (Braun el al 2012, p. 24). I therefore argue that place branding should move towards 'a linear process of necessary steps but as a complex web of intertwined processes', where participation is not only limited to gathering information and feedback (Kavaratzis 2012, p. 10). Furthermore, practitioners' acknowledgement that perspectives of local stakeholders should be considered in the process of place branding since, as partners, will support and sustain the brand are echoed by the findings of this research (Baker 2007; Hanna & Rowley 2011). The analysis supports the need for place branding needs to move 'from the communication-dominant approach to the participation-dominant approach' (Braun el al 2012, p.25) and the relevance of alternative governance models to allow stakeholder engagement beyond purely consultative processes.

Finally, the role of consultants in the branding process was also discussed at length when assessing consultation. In this sense, government and tourism officials interpreted the role of consultants differently. Participants with tourism backgrounds argued that the use of consultants does not necessarily add value to the brand since the research work needs to be done by local organisations if it is to reflect the tourism product and how it is intrinsically linked to the values and identity of the place. The research work consequently needs to be developed and owned by those who will be ultimately implementing the strategies. I argue that parallels can be drawn between the issue of ownership (or disconnect with the strategy) noted by participants in the relationship consultant-government branding organisation and the issues emerging when branding strategies fail to engage residents.

7.6 Issues encountered during the strategic and implementation phases

This section outlines the issues underlying participants' approaches to branding Tasmania. The findings are divided into contextual, cultural and structural issues affecting the branding of the state. Contextual issues are those particular to Tasmania's socioeconomic characteristics. Cultural issues are related to the history of stakeholder relationships or engagement in the management of places. Finally, structural issues include the impediments resulting from the specific model or approach taken to brand places.

7.6.1 Contextual issues: particular issues to the Tasmanian context

Participants stressed difficulties of coordinating policy. These are linked to the number of bureaucracies resulting from of the duplication of local government structures and narrow views centred on self-interest or own-survival dominant in smaller municipalities. There were perceived as hurdles to processes of deliberation in place branding, as per the quote below:

> I think we're starting to [be successful], but we have in the north, seven councils, seven local tourism associations and 498 businesses. And this brand is just over a year old (participant 7, in-depth interview).

a. North and south divide

The north-south divide was linked to a particular political structure or business model, and described as a direct consequence of a lack of a culture of collaboration between the two regions in the state, that can be attributed to the Hobart-centric nature of government administration.

> That conflict and that contrast actually creates a remarkable story for someone to discover when they're here. So why hide it? Why be in Hobart and go 'bloody northerners'? There's a much better story for even someone in Hobart to talk about, the crazy northerners who refuse to follow the Hobart lead. Beautiful. I'm compelled. I want to go up to the north and check it out (participant 7, in-depth interview).

b. Sense of apathy towards change

Participants also highlighted the tensions between innovation at a corporate management level and the resistance of governments to adapt to new demands arising from complex issues. Such aversion to change was linked to government's role as gatekeepers of information, and the power they gave to control decision-making and public funds:

> It comes back to the gatekeeper problem, because people are in what they think are jobs for life, because there is a lack of real competition. There is not a real market for jobs in Tasmania. And it's not the only place where it happens, but I think it's a really big part of the problem (participant 20, in-depth interview).

In addition, as noted in Chapter Five, often competition for growth and resources, coupled with a lack of organic leadership[366], generates the expectation that government will ultimately act on issues affecting reputation.

c. Self-interest for survival

Participants reported very low trust in collaboration, primarily due to a stakeholder tendency to act in their own self-interest. Participants highlighted the need to prioritise their survival under tough economic conditions where they compete for business or public funding to assist the development of their own branding and development activities, as per the quote below:

> [Other stakeholders] are very generous but the kind of generosity they have for each other is based on self-interest, so they are not in the communal space (participant 6, focus group III).

7.6.2 Cultural issues: collaboration and engagement in Tasmania

No [there is no structure for collaboration], it is one of the big lacks in Tasmania.
(participant 6, focus group III)

The study also found some cultural issues that are hindering the success of the state's branding campaigns. Participants agreed that collaboration between stakeholders in Tasmania is not widespread and that, when enacted, it serves mainly instrumental purposes and that the relationships formed have a short-term lifespan. The lack of culture of communication and collaboration, together with regional issues such as the north-south divide have resulted in conflicting branding strategies, as well as a waste of resources. The cultural issues outlined in this section include: a lack of communication and knowledge sharing; a lack of culture of collaboration; and an unclear relationship between leadership, authority and legitimacy in place branding.

a. Lack of communication and knowledge sharing

Participants highlighted a lack of inter-organisational communication, dialogue or negotiation for common branding strategies, which hinders engagement:

> One of the most evident thing from the discussions was a complete lack of perspective with the other partner. We can back the council, and we can back the government, but unless you understand what they have to get done to get you what you want you are going to get frustrated just by not understanding what your partners want or can do (participant 7, focus group I).

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[366] Here I borrow Jing and Avery's definition of 'organic leadership' as a 'paradigm [that] relies on reciprocal actions, where team members work together in whatever roles of authority and power they may have, not based on position power' (2008, p.72). Organic leadership is characterised by a multiplicity of leaders in dynamic and heterogeneous environments where no formal leadership structure exists, and leadership is a based on a culture of shared vision and values.

> I was really dismayed at the lack of public space for what I call democratic dialogue (participant 20, in-depth interview).[367]

Participants noted that the information often flows through the particular networks of highly dynamic and widely connected individuals within the organisations or institutions branding the state (although often working in isolation):

> What I found working with [a particular organisation], is that they don't understand what I do and what I don't do well enough. It comes down to the relationships of the individual (participant 7, focus group I).[368]

Participants, however, agreed that communication is needed in order to advance place branding practices. For instance, from a business perspective, participants noted that informing residents about branding strategies was similar to informing staff in an organisation, as highlighted by the quote below:

> Communication is key, and unless people know and share consistently and positively what is going on and how can people work together is just not going to work. So regardless of the model you create of hierarchy, bubbles, whatever, unless you have a communications strategy that sits firmly within it, it is just not going to work (participant 14, focus group I).

b. Lack of culture of collaboration across public, private and voluntary sectors

Despite the apparent lack of culture of collaboration, participants noted that place branding in the state was moving towards more cross-sectoral approaches to collaboration and cooperation where responsibility and accountability are shared by all stakeholders, as illustrated in this example:

> A big part of the success of that public diplomacy work depends on the cross-sector cross-silo collaborations (participant 20, in-depth interview).

Although participants noted that collaboration is a distinctive characteristic of the Tasmanian social fabric, their interest in alternative models signals a need to move away from traditional hierarchical models to other forms of governance that allow greater engagement and democratic participation:

> We are talking now about a complete different model, which is a 'bubble model'. Partnerships, still have leadership but is not always the same leader, it depends on what you are doing as per who is in the middle…It was actually organically coming out of a board discussion. Let's come out of

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[367] The participant attributed the lack of a public sphere or critical arena where complex issues could be discussed and debated, compared to other Australian regions and particularly cities to issues around collaboration: 'I think there is a lack of capacity and not knowing […] So we need the dialogue. Without it we are nothing' (participant 20, in-depth interview).

[368] *Other examples include*: 'I said it has to become sustainable so that is not so dependent on me as an individual and my pre-existing public profile and also my own professional networks' (participant 20, in-depth interview); and 'It is kind of trying to think about the resource and how can you maximise that, I don't know, synergy of people' (participant 12, in-depth interview).

> with an independent model […] Here each bubble is responsible to contribute and steer rather than holding the state or government accountable (participant 7, focus group I).[369]

c. Leadership, authority and legitimacy

As expected, the issue of leadership was discussed at length. Participants noted a perceived lack of effective leadership in place branding processes and leadership was subsequently linked to issues of ownership, accountability, legitimacy and responsibility. The expectation that governments will take a problem-solving role that translates into a leadership role is noted in quote below:

> The argument we are having is 'we are confusing government with leadership'. We assume that the government and tourism departments are going to be the leaders in Tasmania. And we feel the same way about councils. And they are not leaders, they are not supposed to be, but we have got to this point of dependence to the point that they are! And it is massive. It is an Australian phenomenon (participant 7, focus group 1).

Participants with public sector experience therefore argued in favour of the government's leadership role in the process of place branding. They posited that the government has a major stake in developing and supporting place identity and reputation, in addition to their duty to account for public expenditure of taxpayers' rates. However, participants noted the many constraints of such a role, primarily due to the government's nature as service provider, alongside community expectations associated to such role. The example below illustrates such tensions and, in this particular case, the local government's resolve to move from a leading or mentoring role to a facilitating one, recognising the need to engage and empower communities in sustainable and long-term planning:

> We have to provide that local leadership, but how do you effectively devolve it back to the community and actually foster and support that journey towards leadership. It is how we can support those passionate people in the community to actually take that leadership role to move forward and actually create some change. And that is how we are putting Tasmania on the map (participant 11, focus group I).[370]

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[369] Other examples include: 'One of the things that the bubble model does is remove the government from the central leadership role […] And we put all the partners there and we deliberatively ignore who was in the middle. So, the middle bubble wasn't filled until each of the partners told the group what they could offer, what their skills were and their resources and what their responsibilities were. And went through everybody. And then at the end of the discussion we said: 'So who should lead this?' And the government guys went 'it is not us', clearly if you see what we do, we shouldn't be in the middle or be the leader. And when it got down to, we actually need a leader, a person and not a department or an agency or whatever, a leader to pull all the people together. And it was really, really, interesting…. But when it comes to that relationship with stakeholders, I think we get caught up in the government in a lead role' (participant 7, focus group I).

[370] In the example above, the phrase 'provide that local leadership' refers to the initiation and funding of projects, that often carries a strong input or strategic direction from government from the onset. Despite the controlling nature of the governments facilitation's role as facilitator, participants noted that real involvement of communities in decision-making and public policy is still needed.

Despite concerns about community expectations linked to their involvement in decision-making processes, participants generally agreed that the community is an integral part of the process and should be taking more responsibility and a leadership role in the process of place branding, as illustrated by the excerpt below:

> Participant 11: it is about meeting community expectations because that it is going to make everything different. You do need to have strategies to mitigate some of those expectations as well. And it is a hard work that you do at the start and being flexible with your objectives. As long as we understand where we want to be and where the opportunity lies we can make another step forward to strengthen what we are doing.
>
> Participant 14: And sometimes is not the destination necessarily, it is the journey.
>
> Participant 11: It is, absolutely.
>
> Participant 14: […] If you just impose something to the community you are going to end up fracturing community.
>
> Participant 11: Exactly.
>
> Participant 14: Kind of like the pulp mill did.[371]
>
> Participant 14: Yet if everybody goes on the journey with you, when you finally get to destination everybody owns it.
>
> Participant 7: Absolutely! (focus group I)

Reflecting on both organic and collaborative communication and information sharing in place branding, participants suggested that leaders have to be strong communicators and be able to favour communicative interactions, beyond their skills in business management or economic development, highlighting as the quote below, a need to rethink the structure in which the process occurs and stakeholder roles, including leadership[372]:

> It does not necessarily have to be a leader it needs to be a communicator. I think there has to be a shift in the top-down, inside-out model, and just make sure that everybody is sharing what they are doing (participant 14, focus group I)

Participants also noted that leadership should not be defined by resources, skills or capabilities, or confined to a legitimate mandate. It should rather extend to include expertise and innovation capacity in the network branding of the place:

> That interchangeable nature of who leads is based on who has got the best chance to make a success of it […] although as you know they [government] love structure, and who is responsible, who is not responsible (participant 7, focus group I).

Finally, participants highlighted issues of trust linked to a shift in leadership highlighting the resistance shown by governments to accept organically emerged leaders:

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[371] For more details on the Pulp Mill case, see Gale (2011).

[372] This particular understanding of what a leader is aligns with the concept of organic leadership introduced in section 7.6.1c that discusses apathy towards change.

> The government is expected to lead, but the government is also doing everything it can to tell us that it is leading. We listen to it but we don't trust it, whereas we listen to those community leaders who do great things and they create change in their own right which then government turns around and listens to (participant 1, in-depth interview).

7.6.3 Structural issues

The structural issues refer to those impediments associated with the governance approach taken to brand places. In the case of Tasmania, the prevalence of a top-down hierarchical model highly subject to the fluctuations of the political cycle has resulted in the reputation of Tasmania being predominantly managed by the state government. This has contributed to the government's role as main stakeholder and investor in the process of place branding, with the power to decide where to allocate much needed public funds. Finally, changes in the political sphere often lead to the development of a renewed vision and image for the state:

> We thought we needed to do something, but we saw it from an economic development perspective rather than from a community development perspective […] And we need to engage these communities. It does need to be grassroots, but I think until we can start to work on some of the structural issues it won't happen (participant 18, in-depth interview)

> So it's actually in the self-interest of the people in those power institutions to broker some strategic space where that energy can flower in a constructive way. But that involves letting go to an extent of an oppositional mindset and often people in those institutions are very demonised and if you look at the way political discourse is, it is always either through binary… So it is either evolution or revolution (participant 20, in-depth interview).

a. Hierarchical, government-dominated strategic planning process

As mentioned in Chapter Five, participants explained that Tasmania's heavy bureaucratic government was often seen as 'in charge' or 'responsible' for delivering place development strategies, as well as assisting the development and implementation of such strategies often through highly hierarchical government-funded organisations or PPP. The quotes below illustrate the lack of initiative of Tasmanian business and organisations that commonly rely heavily on the government to act to solve their problems:

> Fundamentally Tasmania waits for the government to tell them what to do. Half a million people, three layers of government, the worst bureaucracy of any community in the world, the most over governed people in the world. That's why you get artificial things (participant 7, in-depth interview).

> […] the way tourism in Tasmania works is quite hierarchical as an industry and marketing group. You have Tourism and the top and then you have your Regional Tourism Organisations and then your local ones (participant 24, in-depth interview).

b. Multiplicity of stakeholders

Lastly, participants expressed concerned with the complicated bureaucratic system of Tasmania and the great number of stakeholders involved in place branding and management:

> [I]n terms of Tasmania at large and the number of stakeholders involved [...] how do you actually manage the values goals and needs of those stakeholders within small organisations, and then how do you create a governance structure that can manage that holistically across the state (participant 19, focus group II).

Discussion: The analysis in this section shows that enhancing participation is a challenging task with many associated issues, and that it needs to be supported by more horizontal communication arrangements. In recognition of such challenges, scholars have attempted to include residents' feedback in the whole place branding process (Braun et al 2013). I argue that in order to better engage civil society the focus needs to go beyond feedback to create real change A shift from communication to participation and a focus on deliberative interactions is needed. I further argue that an innovative governance model would assist communities in facing the challenges that prevent them from dealing with complex issues efficiently (Van Buuren et al 2014). Similarly, public diplomacy campaigns directed to internal publics (residents) should be replaced by new governance models that allow shared decision-making and distribute control equably, foster ownership and are based on processes of place brand co-creation. As stated in Chapter Five, government's dominance of the (formal) branding process is challenged by the counter-power of mass communication and self-organising networks of communication (Castells 2013). Furthermore, the lack of engagement of the civil society in the place branding process points towards a lack of democracy in decision-making in public policy. The lack of engagement also translates in apathy: 'there is a major issue about the attitudes of the public, as customers or citizens, towards local government… This is a symptom of a lack of deeper malaise, the weakness or lack of public commitment to local democracy' (Clark & Steward 1998, p. 3 in Gaventa 2004, p. 26).

I argue that the perceived position of leadership of public organisations is probably rooted in their understanding of place branding processes strictly as tools for economic development (Anholt 2007; Kavaratzis 2007). Perhaps '"old" sources of authority are used to legitimise new institutions, accepted norms of public discourse and decision-making shape people's voice and articulation in new spaces' (Cleaver 2002, p. 274). Moving forward towards collaborative models, I argue that in this sense, although decision-making needs to be shared, leadership in networks can create the conducive environment for productive interaction (Klijn & Teisman 1997); and incentivise the involvement of stakeholders (Agranoff & McGuire 1999). Leadership can be also supported by a shared vision that brings together the views of all stakeholders (Zaharna 2014). A common vision supports mutual trust.[373] When managing multiple

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[373] In the governance literature, mutual trust is defined as a condition for the existence of governance networks (Jacobsen 2009).

stakeholders, legitimacy in the interactions needs to be observed, since ‘the message is the message, and the sender of the message is at the source of the construction of meaning’ (Castells 2013, p. 418).

With regards to the structural issues, Tasmania’s top-down branding model does not allow for self-organisation of stakeholders in more democratic participatory structures, and relies on experts on economic development and spatial planning to develop marketing campaigns. Participants’ insights also demonstrate that political will and governments’ risk-averse nature complicates participatory processes (Ind & Bjerke 2007). The impossibility to accommodate the interests, needs and current strategic activities of the different stakeholders is a fundamental problem. Participants also recognised, however, that multilateral coordination requires an adjustment of individual interests and goals of the organisations that form the network (O’Toole 1997). Therefore, in guiding collective action, the place branding network needs to find governance arrangements that favour collective processes before particular interests, existing hierarchies and ownership.

Despite the apparent difficulties in managing stakeholders ‘appropriate solutions can emerge from complex problems, through the aggregate behaviour of individuals, rather than through the direction of a single authority’ (Gowers 2008, p. 317). This is not to deny the role of place branding practitioners, but to support a renewed role for them as facilitators. The shift can assist the creation of an environment suitable for collaboration and the development of a stronger network. It could perhaps even result in a more engaged and responsible civil society. Finally, I acknowledge that there are many difficulties associated with the development of a participatory approach. Furthermore, although civil society supports greater levels of engagement, the public and private sector seem to be supportive in theory bur very cynical when assessing the practical implications of participatory models.

7.7 Resources available to Brand Tasmania

None of the significant activities that happen in this state would happen without some level of subsidy from the government or local government. And the major players know that so there is a real fear of ‘I need to get in first’.

(participant 24, focus group III)

7.7.1 Public resources

In Tasmania, as noted above and in Chapter Five, the concentration of financial resources in the public domain has resulted in constant competition between stakeholders for public funding. This perceived competition has affected collaboration, as highlighted in the quote below:

> I suspect that, whilst there is always an element of that everywhere, in Tasmania there is only government, whether state or local, that has first of all a resource level that can do things, although

there are competing demands for that. You have the capacity to do a particular thing, you've got the resources, effort to do it but then there is that other group who is driving that, and their own agenda. And you might not get it from anyone else because everybody else is concerned with their own thing. And they see everything else more as a threat rather than an opportunity (participant 17, focus group III).[374]

The only restriction was resources (participant 20, in-depth interview).

To do that marketing branding you do need significant resources to do it properly […] [organisations with more resources] probably end up having more impact because they have more resources, and that would influence a certain amount what happens but generally the government has to look holistically at what's there, but you'll definitely have levels of what's being promoted (participant 11, in-depth interview).

Participants also agreed that in the public domain, branding organisations seem to be either underfunded or funded for short-term initiatives:

The biggest disappointment I went on a lot about was that the importance of brand overall can't be achieved. Brand Tasmania gets $400,000 dollars a year. Its 1 ½ people basically and its representational board. If they're serious about it you could really create a significant organisation, $10m a year budget to really make it accountable for influencing Tasmania's overall brand positioning and working with all the stakeholders that have a role to play in that (participant 17, in-depth interview).[375]

Similarly, participants stressed concerns about diminishing funding budgets of government across all areas, resulting in higher competitiveness between organisations, and heavy lobbying to the detriment of collaboration within competing organisations, as highlighted below:

The government is *broke* (participant 22, in-depth interview).

Having the resources made a massive difference of course. There were a few political issues. We tried to knock on all these doors and they all got slammed in our face (participant 16, in-depth interview).

In this sense, participants moved towards a reflective stage to suggest that a change in funding allocation models might support better collaborative models by removing the competitiveness that feeds self-interest on stakeholders:

There is one very simple way. It is that every prime mover that isn't a business is funded mainly by state government or a fair amount and the sector leader that unites people that are private businesses is entirely funded by state government. You could always have the leader of the government to say we are adapting a new model and in order to be funded by us, so that's the TICT, TT, Business

[374] This idea of competing demands is also related to government's need to seem 'neutral' or 'objective' in their allocation of funding resources. Although sometimes stakeholders concentrate their energy on the activities of some organisations that result in better outcomes for the community, the politics around funding allocation have to consider an equal share for all: 'You want the community to be able to say well, we are doing some great work over here, and this is where we see that we're working towards, and with additional funding or additional support we could do this and this, and that would be really beneficial. And we've already got some runs on the board and you know, we've got some traction. But if government was to just apply funding to that organisation, any other competing organisation or any other group that thinks that they might have been a competing organisation' (participant 11, in-depth interview).

[375] This is also supported by the following quotation: 'They [government] provided some support […] but not in an on-going way' (participant 20, in-depth interview).

Tasmania, inside government, outside government this has to be part of what you do (participant 6, focus group III).

7.7.2 Private resources

It's the perceived resources are in government, yes, so the community thinks that's where it should be done.

(participant 1, in-depth interview)

As stated above, branding in Tasmania relies mainly on public monetary resources, with the exception of a handful of large private companies that have invested in branding their specific product by positioning it as Tasmanian with collateral effects on the image of Tasmania in the minds of their consumers (i.e. the Federal Group's range of high-end hospitality products). Public-private collaboration has, however, been scarce, '[b]ecause there is a fixed pool. So, it is a win-loss situation' (participant 17, focus group III). Participants representing private industry, and business organisations emphasised a lack of investment in engagement:

> Everything comes down to dollars pretty much unless you can get donated resources, but if you look of how are you going to get increased sense of place, those activities that have to happen would involve a human resource, then a heavy pay for that, and then if you are using electronic resources, then you have your website and social media (participant 11, in-depth interview).[376]

7.7.3 Other resources: social capital

Reflecting on the issues related to financial resources, participants suggested other resources, such as expertise and knowledge as underexploited, and also the capacity to bring stakeholder groups together for a common purpose, based on leadership and social capital (perhaps at an individual level):

> [A leader] does not have a lot of money but very high social capital (participant 6, focus group III).

> That [having a common vision] would be perfect and it needs to happen. absolutely. I'm pretty sure that people are looking at it now, the other echelons of how that can actually happen (participant 21, in-depth interview).

> It's not development of the work. It's agreement on the essence. The framework and the role that you're playing, that doesn't need money fundamentally. In fact, case in point, the tourism brand work didn't cost money. It costs a little bit of getting people in the room together, workshopping and going through. We did that over a number of months. Yes, that required money but, in the scheme of it, very minimal amounts of money. It was probably more time, to be honest, than money (participant 15, in-depth interview).

Discussion: ownership of resources and its impact on decision-making was identified as one of the key issues to be addressed in order for place branding to be effective (Ashworth & Kavaratzis

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[376] Engagement is therefore clearly not part of decision-making: 'But we should have had better links. If I had more time at the game, I would link into the series of forums around the state to try and get input from the community before the actual forum itself, and then to go back to the community to promote. We couldn't afford to do that. We did think that at the time, we just couldn't afford it' (participant 18, post in-depth interview).

2010). Although resources (mainly financial) may primarily be located in the public sector in the case of Tasmania, participants suggested that place branding needs to perhaps focus less on resource allocation and rather emphasise social capital as a catalyst to channel stakeholders' efforts towards a common purpose (Hankinson 2004), and to establish 'political unity' to support a common identity (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, p. 27) or 'brand purpose' (Anholt 2008, p. 3).

7.8 Expected and real outcomes of different approaches to branding Tasmania

> *Network effectiveness is defined here as the attainment of positive network-level outcomes that could not normally be achieved by individual organisational participants acting independently.*
>
> *(Provan & Kenis 2007, p. 230)*

As introduced in the previous sections, formal public attempts to brand the state were considered as successful by public branding organisations, despite a lack of clear evidence. Although most government officials indicated that they were successful also in engaging other stakeholders, it was noted that the branding attempts focused mainly on community consultation for (urban) planning and development, as a blueprint for economic development, as evidenced by the quote below:

> It was the most thorough process that we've ever done, but really, really resource intensive, but good result. I think the [government organisation] felt that the 20-year vision was authentic, it was what the residents were saying (participant 24, in-depth interview).

7.8.1 Successes

In addition to government officials, those participants engaged in destination branding reported that they were successful in their attempts to brand Tasmania, primarily based on extensive industry engagement and promotional campaigns. However, some argued that there was still disengagement of certain industry sectors and that their success measurement framework did not look beyond specific campaigns, as highlighted below:

> We did have a lot of success over those couple of years. I think in terms of industry confidence somewhat, and that has been represented by the industry sentiment surveys, suggesting that the future of tourism and destination Tasmania was very positive and the awareness that individuals had of the role that they played in that improved significantly (participant 15, in-depth interview).

Similarly, those participants with experience as private tourism operators recognised a general success in building a comprehensive destination brand project, including all facets of the place's identity, although in practice they refer to extensive consultation processes.

Participants also noted that the tourism industry is especially good at summoning efforts towards a common branding project:

> I think they [branding organisation] were on the right track […] they've continued campaigning but what they haven't spent a lot of time and energy on is talking into the industry about how they live the brand (participant 7, in-depth interview).

> Development and proactive branding in isolation never works. With [private tourism business], we did a lot of work with focus groups and with research, and we could afford to. And it worked really well (participant 18, in-depth interview).

Again, participants clearly stated that developing a successful brand project required stakeholder involvement and sustainable long-term relationships:

> You actually can't be seen to being a government department, you need to have very strong private sector involvement. The reason why you shouldn't rely too much on government is that they are cyclical, every 4 years they are up for re-election and they can change their emphasis, whereas place-of-origin branding has to be a very long term positioning, so you are looking at something 10-15 to 20 years out and you are trying to build values based on that […] You've got to be consistent, you've got to have consistent messages, and we figured that our messages must be right because it's all working pretty well for us (participant 23, in-depth interview).

7.8.2 Failures

Despite the tourism success story, participants recognised the state's failure to project a cohesive and coherent brand project. They further argued the need for an 'umbrella brand' or common vision underpinning collaboration, as noted below:

> We have tried before and it requires political and industry leadership and agreement […] Because it is kind of happening by default, but a more strategic piece that brings all of those together in the same galaxy. Not to say they need to be completely interconnected, but they need to be part of a family. And it is happening by a way of osmosis as much as anything (participant 15, in-depth interview).[377]

> How to engage our ICT sector, or our design sector or our music sector, or our gallery, MONA, creative arts sector, needs to all come together and formulate the overarching brand Tasmania (participant 15, in-depth interview).

Finally, since participants envisioned the place branding task and its outcomes differently depending on their own interests and objectives, they determined their success differently. Whereas for some the outcome was to increase visitation, members of the voluntary sector and civil society emphasised longer-term outcomes such as the development of the place's assets to support a strong identity, as highlighted in the quote below:

> If we have the right infrastructure and culture for entrepreneurs and technologists to be able to make a living doing what they love to do, then they will move to Tasmania. But not because we've got the infrastructure and the culture, those are just enabling things, but because we've got fantastic food and we've got fantastic wine, and it's a wonderful place to live and we have clean air (participant 9, in-depth interview).[378]

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[377] Some government officials, however, were highly critical of the lack of collaboration between branding organisations despite a political will or enforcement to make collaboration happen: 'Unsuccessful in that dimension [trying to bring together different key players in branding the state]. Didn't get anywhere. Tried, but a combination of "no, we just want to do our thing", bit of lip service and no money' (participant 17, in-depth interview).

[378] The small scale and size of the island and the relatively ease of gathering or getting into certain circles: 'I think this is a massive opportunity for Tasmania, and given that we are an island and we know each other and we can communicate openly and actively' (participant 15, in-depth interview); 'I can't imagine that there is a smarter way than bringing people together, be it digitally or I tend to feel physically of bringing people together to share information

7.8.3 On evaluating change: evolution or revolution?

When discussing the success or failure of their approaches, participants stressed that their outcomes where heavily influenced by the evolutionary component of change in parochial and closed communities like Tasmania. This again highlighted a perceived lack of success of short-term interventions, and pointed towards the need for a cultural or educational shift.

Thus, in their assessment of the outcomes, participants emphasised the lack of culture of collaboration in Tasmania, and a need for change in practice (or governance). This change, they acknowledge, would entail more than one specific intervention, since it would have to be based around education and community development:

> I think this community [Tasmania] responds better to things that you build slowly and gently rather than throwing them in their face and they actually come on board and see value and own and become a part of. Just saying 'everybody is going to come on board with this' just won't work. That stakeholder side needs to be built overtime. A quality focus rather than quantity. Since we can't do it bigger we need to do it better. If we can continue to focus on quality, and do softly and gently… It is not going to happen tomorrow (which is my preferred way) but you grow a community, you grow from a grass-roots level rather than imposing something on the community (participant 14, focus group I).

> It's not about believing. We need to do it. We need to be true to ourselves. We love this place and it is special. Having a longer-term vision around what that looks like for prosperity for our future generation is simply absolutely necessarily (participant 15, in-depth interview).

Discussion: Those participants involved in public branding attempts argued that they were successful in their branding practices. However, they also noted that their place branding processes aimed at short-term specific interventions to boost a specific sector in the economy (for instance, tourism). Participants struggled to articulate exactly what they achieved and how they measured their KPIs[379], or what were they aiming to achieve. This lack of clarity resonates the concern observed in the literature of place branding about the lack of clear success measurement frameworks for place branding processes (Florek 2012; Hankinson 2012; Hildreth 2011; Klijn et al 2012; Zenker 2011; Zenker & Braun 2015) also linked to the lack of agreed conceptual frameworks and clear definitions as discussed in the theory development chapters. Despite such differences, participants ultimately understood the need for engagement in long-term decision-making and agenda setting, grounded in grass-roots involvement (Gnoth 2002; Sevin 2010). They noted the evolutionary nature of such developments to support a positive response and enhance engagement in the community and network, and questioned whether there

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to share ideas, cluster, you know have the opportunity to cluster and develop hubs perhaps. From that you start to see whether the picture is the imposed brand or is it a different shape' (participant 10, in-depth interview).

[379] Key Performance Indicator.

was a need for the more 'radical' intervention that I had argued for , in this instance, a change of governance models allowing greater collaboration.

7.9 Participants' views of a participant-governed alternative governance model

I thought that was very powerful and for Tasmania to truly succeed we need to be an inclusive and welcoming place that is proud of its place.

(participant 18, in-depth interview)

The second part of this chapter analyses participants' insights into the applicability of the proposed alternative participant-governed participatory place branding model for Tasmania. The alternative governance model was presented to participants and discussed in the interventions (see Appendix Six for a sample and details on the presentation of the model to participants).[380]

The findings are divided into two main areas following the patterns emerging from the discussions: issues related to the application of the model and opportunities for the model to be further developed and implemented or operationalised. Each area is further divided into emerging themes arising from the interventions. Table 8 below shows an overview of the emerging themes and subthemes:

ISSUES	SUBTHEMES
Large and diverse stakeholder base	Management issues
Apathy	Lack of engagement and disconnect
Legitimacy	Leadership to support legitimacy
Structure	Lack of clear structure of the model
Lack of culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing	Non-conducive environment Self-interest Debate slows down decision making Resistance to share resources and knowledge
OPPORTUNITIES	**SUBTHEMES**
Alignment of the branding message	Sharing information to inform practice
Changes in global trends	Move towards collaboration
Acknowledgement of the dynamism of place identity	Capitalising on richness
The opportunity of a threat	Bringing actors together for a common purpose
Revolution	Evolution: towards increasing changes

Table 8. Outline of the Findings from the Sociological Intervention by Emerging Themes (Author's own).

The data presented in this section is extracted primarily from the FG interventions that followed the first round of in-depth interviews and focus groups. The first subsection reflects on the

[380] Here it is important to remind the reader that in this dissertation I am not arguing that the participant-governed model chosen for the intervention would be more effective than other networked models. The intention instead was to prompt participants to reflect on an alternative model.

perceived issues arising from the discussion on the application of the model in Tasmania. The conversation around the issues focused on the constraints of the existing branding structure, along with the environmental (socioeconomic and cultural) context in which place branding occurs in Tasmania. Through the discussions, participants attempted to define an ideal environment for the suggested participatory model to be successfully implemented. The review of the issues potentially hindering the application of the model is followed in the second section by an outline of the opportunities for implementation and potential benefits of the model. Finally, I analyse issues around the place branding discourse in Tasmania through an analysis of the terminology used by participants to refer to the process of branding Tasmania. In this sense, I argue that there needs to be clarification of purpose for collaboration to be possible. Similarly, the focus group interventions demonstrated that, unless there is a common space and a framework for participants to discuss their approaches to place branding, mutual understanding and collaboration are not possible.

7.10 Perceived issues to the implementation of the model

Unequal powers, unequal resources and unequal access –zero-sum game.

(Marsh & Rhodes 1992, p. 251)

Naturally, the discussion on the alternative model presented to participants focused mainly on the issues associated with its implementation from the outset, and occupied most of the session's time. However, the detailed review and discussion led to identifying the opportunities that exist within such constraints. The conversation shifted from a negative and quite cynical critique of the model, to a problem-solving collaborative review of the model to operationalise participation further. Members started to indeed collaborate to envisage changes to the model that would result in its effective implementation, regardless of their degree of scepticism. The issues encountered are thematically divided into the following categories: management a large number of diverse stakeholders; apathy towards collaboration or change; leadership; lack of clear structure or framework for collaboration; lack of culture of collaboration; and lack of knowledge sharing.

7.10.1 Managing a large number of diverse stakeholders

In line with the findings from the in-depth interview stage, participants noted the challenge involved with coordinating large numbers of stakeholders in a networked governance setup:

> Participant 6: You just said you think it is an advantage that we are small. Do you think it is also a challenge? […] My experience of living in smaller places is hard because everyone has a much broader group of stakeholders. Like to bring one representative from every group that feel that have a part in expressing us and making us seen and desirable island, it would be a couple hundred people. A lot of people are involved in it. Whereas if you went to bigger places, like NYC, you'll have 8 agencies who will all be sending one person because they have the ownership to drive what New York is. It doesn't seem that Tasmania has ever agreed who our lead agents are. Participant 24: and we are very good at recognising minorities.

> Participant 6: Everyone gets a voice (focus group III).

Participants recognised that this is particularly relevant in Tasmania, where within groups with the same purpose, division is often observed:

> Somebody just gave me a little map of the left-hand side of the environmental movement in Tasmania. 60 groups! (participant 6, focus group III).

Consequently, participants expressed concern about managing stakeholders' interests, and the challenges of developing a model without an overarching authority, as exemplified below:

> Try to see how a governance model could come from the stakeholders themselves and not be imposed on them from the [organisations'] committee, I find it extraordinarily hard to imagine that it would work. In my heart, I want it to, that kind of utopian vision where everybody would just mark down strengths and weaknesses, you know all of that and would just work. But I really suspect that with all of the challenges of running each of those individual small businesses that it wouldn't (participant 3, focus group II).

Although participants were concerned with the lack of expertise (and consequently lack of legitimacy) of certain non-traditional stakeholders, such as civil society, they recognised that collaboration at all levels would ultimately bring better outcomes to branding Tasmania:

> One of the problems that I've seen is that in terms of this idea of organic-ness and community involvement, [is that] they have got people that I don't actually think they're experts or they actually don't pull in the stakeholders and the experts to provide feedback (participant 19, Focus group II).
>
> In fact, I think one of our key roles is the collective impact approach […] I believe the more diverse the collaboration, the better the outcome (participant 18, in-depth interview).
>
> So, I use the collective impact approach rather than council ending up having to do everything. Because, if they do, it is going to take a lot longer (participant 11, focus group I).

Discussion: Participants' accounts and analysis of the impediments for the development of a network model provide useful guidelines for the development of participatory models. Furthermore, they detailed the challenges associated to managing a large number of actors with a diverse range of knowledge, skills and resources. Consequently, although networks are the structures for collective action (Powell et al 2005) the multiplicity of stakeholders involved represents a big challenge for the application of the model (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005).

Despite the challenges outlined, participants recognised a need for greater engagement of the local community in the process, where (public) place managers need to rethink their role and position of authority (Braun et al 2013; Colomb & Kalandides 2010; Freire 2009; Insch & Florek 2010; Kavaratzis 2012; Olsson & Berglund 2009; Zenker & Seigis 2012). Place managers, mainly located in government and the public sector, however, have traditionally seen themselves as leaders of the place branding process and therefore showed reticence to change (Ind & Bjerke 2007).

Although individual and collective interests can be pursued through diverse institutions (Benjaminsen & Lund 2002) changes towards participatory place branding need to address further the issue of place brand ownership. In the public sphere 'the co-creation of brand meanings by consumers shifts brand ownership from the managerial and legalist sphere of intellectual property rights and trademarks to consumers and brand users' (Aitken & Campelo 2011, p. 916). In this context, a network arrangement with shared ownership does not function as a legal entity, but rather as a cooperative endeavour. Similarly, the question of legitimacy is addressed by an alternative governance model that ensures collective action, support and engagement. This is often the role of institutions of authority, managing collaboration, and coordinating joint action and resources.

In addition, often residents are unaware of their right to express their opinions and participate in place branding processes because their lack of knowledge is purposely maintained since it benefits entrenched top-down organisations. This illustrates that power not only puts boundaries to participation (by excluding some actors), but can also be internalised in terms of values, self-esteem and identities (Gaventa 2004, p.37). As Kavaratzis (2012) argues perhaps investment needs to be diverted from promotional campaigns and the design of visual identities to furthering participation and two-way communication, measures which could, in turn, result more cost-effective.

7.10.2 Apathy: lack of engagement of some stakeholders

Following the findings of the interviews, participants noted the difficulty of (re)engaging stakeholders traditionally left aside or disengaged, emphasising the need to address the apathy of marginalised stakeholders in the political system and governance processes. This apathy is often the result of a lack of confidence in their capacity to collectively and collaboratively enact change:

> [T]he big discrepancy for me comes with lack of confidence. With lack of confidence there's a lack of autonomy; or if people have their autonomy taken away from them then they have a lack of confidence. […] It also harbours that real apathy slash resentment, getting back to sort of the political stuff at the moment. Which is that people are just opting out, just not turning on the news at the moment. You don't read the newspaper, you don't want to know about it because you don't have any power (participant 2, focus group IV).
>
> I think there are a lot of people out there who have learned either that the system doesn't work or that the system doesn't welcome them. And as a result, they have no confidence to actually engage with that system (participant 9, focus group II).[381]

The perceived lack of engagement of civil society (mainly residents), clearly relates to their previous involvement in processes related to place branding or place management. This is

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[381] This is further illustrated by the following quote: 'Perhaps you teach people to be patient by teaching them that there's good outcomes and there's better outcomes and better collective outcomes that they're going to be able to see that to make the... Whatever frustration worthwhile' (participant 2, focus group IV).

relevant to Tasmania where, when civil society is consulted, it is often very reactive to governments' initiatives as exemplified by the excerpt below:

> Participant 8: […] There was the forest industry and then there was the environmental industries, two really important things that came together. But actually, they reached out to the third party and that was the communities that were affected and that's why that fell down. Because the communities that were impacted weren't engaged in the process […].
>
> Participant 4: They had no confidence, the community had no confidence.
>
> Participant 8: That's right because they saw that...
>
> Participant 1: They wanted them bashing on the doors saying hey, why aren't we at the table?
>
> Participant 4: And that's the main thing that civil society is always disengaged.
>
> Participant 23: It seems though that that transitioning that we're hoping for is happening through you know, in terms of just new business models coming in. But the politics... On the politics side, they want to take it back to what it was before.
>
> Participant 8: Okay.
>
> Participant 23: So, there's a big disconnect there (focus group IV).

Furthermore, participants raised concern about the impact of the lack of participation of different stakeholder groups and the need for a more democratic and inclusive model to battle an apparent apathy towards the existing system. These concerns signal how the existing system might be constraining participation due to endemic practices or perceptions:

> The other particularly important thing to know is that when you do consultation, the input you get has to be really valued. But then it is only that of those that gave it to you and there's generally a whole group of people in the community that don't engage. You then say 'that's what the community wants'. So, then that needs to be tested further to make sure that actually stands up or not (participant 13, focus group IV).

Accordingly, despite a recognition of the further need for collaboration and alignment of messages in place branding, participants noted the relative success of their practices, driven primarily by the quality of the product on offer, particularly in the case of destination branding and COO:

> There are two ways that stuff can happen: either organically from the bottom up, which I think won't happen here; or it needs a strategic driver for it and leadership at that level, and an example of how that could happen, but isn't happening. And I am a big believer in having those. We have a theoretical organisation that should do it, […] there have been attempts to make them focus on this but they are too much just doing what's in their comfort zone (participant 17, focus group III).

Discussion: Consultation was the primary concern od participants. Those involved in public branding argued that consultation often fails due to the apathy or lack of information of the public, thus validating the necessity for top-down strategic leadership in such cases. This failure highlights tensions between innovative models at a corporate management level and the resistance to adapt by governments. The apathy of civil society points towards acceptance of governments' top-down structure and unilateral decision-making characterised by a tightly controlling environment and aversion to risk and change. It is therefore important that governments also recognise the importance of stakeholder involvement and allow adaptive governance for more sustainable practices (Folke et al 2005, see Chapter Three).

7.10.3 Legitimacy

> *That comes back to the role of government, as I see it, amplifying good things that are happening already, telling the story and providing extra resourcing. Helping out but not picking winners. It's about finding communities and cultures and leaders who are willing to put an enormous amount of time and energy into doing something. And then supporting them and helping them to navigate the system and that sort of thing. Often it works in reverse to that. Projects get announced and then they look for the people to help drive them.*
>
> *(participant 9, focus group IV)*

The discussion of the model was centred around the need to seek legitimate leaders to drive and support alternative governance arrangements if the government was to transition from its leading role to a facilitating one. The issue was debated widely and leadership was envisaged mainly in two ways. Firstly, participants stressed that leadership needs to come from highly-regarded successful individuals, since they are able to navigate power struggles. Participants seemed positive that leadership could be and often is found outside government ranks:

> If you had to go through and write down who the leaders are in this region half them offer their leadership on a voluntary sense. [...] They have no ownership, no awareness of ownership or vested interest in pursuing anything [...] You've got to gain belief and then ownership, otherwise the whole thing just collapses into another document in a bookcase and we've got plenty of them (participant 7, focus group II).

Secondly, participants highlighted that, even within a more participatory model, strong involvement and direction from the government is needed to secure trust and uphold accountability. In the absence of government as a leader or facilitator, participants suggested that the network model presented would lack legitimacy and ownership given the context of Tasmania:

> [T]here will always be a dependency on anything you do, that you have to have the government present in Tasmania, otherwise it won't be substantiated (participant 7, focus group II).

Furthermore, government was at times regarded as the only organisation able to initiate change processes towards collaboration:

> Whilst it [Northern Regions Futures Plan] has been driven from within government, we had to start somewhere. Frankly, if someone didn't show that initial leadership [...] (participant 7, focus group II).

However, in partial contradiction to the above, participants reported that one of the impediments to the model succeeding was precisely government's perceived authority and power. During their interventions, participants argued that the expectation is that the government's participation implies they will take a leading role, based on their ultimate responsibility as managers of taxpayers' funds, even in instances when government claims to be facilitating the process:

> From the state perspective, I end up with a lot of questions around how achievable it is. Given the fact that government comes into it and the entrenched perception that government is in charge (participant 11, focus group II).
>
> That's [with non-government resources] actually the only way that I believe that it's actually going to get done (participant 9, focus group IV).[382]

Concurrent with what participants observed during the in-depth interview phase, and as outlined in Chapter Five, Tasmania's dependency on funding from the public sector and a tradition of government leading strategic planning for development was reflected in participants' concern about government's necessary presence and leadership role in branding processes. Participants also noted, however, that the government's presence often hindered lateral thinking or initiatives for change due to its conservative and risk-averse nature. This was stressed by participants with business backgrounds, who also claimed their leadership role as practitioners and experts. These tensions are reflected in the quote below:

> [T]his idea of growing […] tends to be in conflict with the conservativeness for the most part of council and government structure. Unless you have private business investment entirely you need government support and you actually then don't meet any criteria because it is beyond what the council or government are currently considering or thinking about or aware of (participant 19, focus group II)[383].

Consequently, participants representing the public sector were particularly concerned about reducing the government's role with regard to other stakeholders in a participant-governed model:

> I still don't know whether.... well participant-governed maybe... but I don't think anything will happen unless there is a state government strong facilitation (participant 17, focus group III).

Furthermore, reflecting on the issue of resources lying primarily in government and the public sector at large, participants suggested that leadership in an alternative governance model has to be rethought and possibly be more based on the capacity of the leader or leading organisation to bring stakeholder groups together for a common purpose (building on social capital) beyond access to financial resources:

> [A leader] does not have a lot of money but very high social capital (participant 6, focus group III).

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[382] Other examples include: 'It doesn't work because [..] the capital flows into stuff because private sector sees a return […] Generally people are looking for a return' (participant 23, focus group IV).
[383] 'The implication is that the government sets out "this is the vision of what's going to happen" and then forms structures for funding and supporting investment, it does not have a situation or a structure in place that allows for that to change in response to new ideas and it takes forever for that to happen' (participant 19, focus group II).

[A leader has] the capacity to bring people along or to want to be part of their vision (participant 8, focus groups IV).

Although participants acknowledged that only key advocates or leaders in the state with strong personal networks could support an alternative governance model, they observed a risk associated with relying on the personal networks or power of such individuals.

Rather than going to the government or certain agencies, we have actually gone out to some people that we see as key advocates, or leaders who can give us some ideas or strategies. But they feed into their networks, the concerns and thoughts we have got. So once again it is sort of dropping a stone in a pond and getting the ripples happening out there. A lot stronger at the centre and gradually diluting as it goes out but still having that impact (participant 11, focus group II).

[…] one of the issues with trying to promote places is that when it's all down to an individual they come up and get burnt out. When you have a network of people it is easier for them. I've often come across people who are championing something and think, first of all, let's take this out of your hands and share it amongst more people instead. It's got more a chance of happening then (participant 9, focus group IV).[384]

Personal networks fragmenting all the time (participant 17, focus group III).

The discussion evolved to consider the legitimate mandate of leadership, pointing towards more fluid understandings of leadership where responsibility is better distributed and leadership is more cyclical:

Bad leaders keep talking and will hold onto that power, whereas a good leader is actually able to relax and kind of come in and come out (participant 9, focus group IV).[385]

It's about individuals, isn't it, it is about the individuals in that steering committee [Harvest], that could make that work. Because once power comes into play it is so very easy to push people away (participant 3, focus group II).

Researcher: Do you think there are good leaders in Tasmania then?

Participant 9: Oh yes, my word, yes.

Participant 8: So they're the ones that are empowering people.

Participant 9: Yes, but they're not necessarily the people who are in power, you know.

Participant 9: Yes, so there's... I think there's a really big disconnect with who's in power and who the leaders are and that's a problem, you know (focus group IV).

In an attempt to move forward and envision the participant-governed model in practice, participants identified leadership as a potential avenue for ensuring accountability. They reflected

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[384] This quote is further supported by an emphasis on the need to focus on strengthening capacity in the community: 'if governments and universities and larger organisations have a role to play, I think it's seeing what's happening in the community, seeing what the strengths are in the community. And then doing what can be done to amplify those strengths in the community' (participant 9, focus group IV).

[385] And this idea of leadership was linked back to government's role as facilitator: 'There's leaders than there's leadership and you know, if you're looking to engage people who are disempowered with government decision making and change making then you need to foster leadership in them. So they can get up and say, speak, so you know, I guess good leaders would be the people who in the end are fostering that leadership in the wider population […] I think the point is that you are a leader in a context. […] And so you can be a leader on one project, you can be a follower on another (participant 9, focus group IV).

on developing organic leadership based not on recognised leaders (those in the public sector in the case of Tasmania) but on those individuals or weavers that are able to take the network to the next level for a common purpose:

> Participant 23: You actually do need leaders. […] that can be a small group of leaders, it doesn't have to be just one person. But you need people who really do take on responsibility and if they need support, then you build support around them. A lot of the time projects often start to flounder because accountability is diffuse. There's nothing to rally behind.
>
> Participant 8: And that's a big issue with government that don't want to be accountable and its risk covers everything and takes a long time because you have to make sure that you stick to your service delivery and don't get out of the books too much.
>
> Participant 23: Yes, and that comes back to […] who appoints someone as a leader and how do you bring leaders together to be that I guess more powerful force? Like who facilitates that or whether they just come across each other and work together. Does someone decide that they're a leader and therefore they're going to nominate themselves? I thought that was interesting, the experts nominate themselves.
>
> Participant 4: You don't really need to nominate anyone when you really know who's actually creating collaboration.
>
> Participant 9: And leadership isn't a title it's an action.
>
> Participant 8: Yes, that's right. (focus group IV)

The discussion around leadership concluded that the main issue for collaboration is governments' gatekeeping. While the rest of the network might actually be willing to collaborate, government stands in the way following a risk management-logic:

> I'm not wealthy person, I kind of just make things happen. So you need to sort of convince people to come with you along the way. The power rests with the gatekeepers and you'll spend more time and more energy trying to convince one or two people in the room than you will trying to convince the other eight or ten (participant 9, focus group IV).

Discussion: Despite participants' agreement about the existence of social capital and individual leaders that could act as catalysts for collaboration, they noted several challenges to the realisation of the model. In particular, they acknowledge the power dynamics that result in the government still acting as 'gatekeeper' in the process of branding Tasmania. The entrenched power struggles led to a high degree of scepticism or cynicism by those participants in the public sector about the application of a participant-governed model in Tasmania.

Communicative exchanges as part of branding processes in the public sphere are inherently subject to power struggles as evidenced by the data. Similarly, participation in place branding processes by members that do not traditionally belong the the political community (i.e. civil society) is often not welcomed by governments that are concerned with drawing a line between communicative and legislative/administrative power to effect public policy (Fraser 2007). This points towards a recognition that, in participant-led processes, participation and deliberation lead to empowerment and greater democratic practices (Hickey & Mohan, 2004), and that these might clash with governments' particular interests and result in gatekeeping measures.

7.10.4 Lack of clear structure of the model

Participants discussed the apparent lack of structure of the model at length. They noted that there was no hierarchy underlying practices, and argued for the need for some form of palpable, clear and firm underlying structure for the model. Through their analysis they strove to fill in this structural gap by suggesting concepts like 'platform' to refer to some form of organisation behind the process of place branding, supported by a strong mandate:

> I think because of the isolated nature of the way in which each of the sectors work in the north, there is not that forum that opportunity that platform, whatever, for people to start working collaboratively (participant 11, focus group II).

Discussion: In light of the lack of clear structure underlying the model, participants expressed concern with the long-term management and viability of the networks (Provan & Kenis 2007). Despite participants' support for organic (emerging) as opposed to 'imposed' top-down branding processes (Braun et al 2013), the uncertainty of fluid, flexible or more adaptive governance model was the primary concern of those participants officially managing the place brand network in Tasmania (primarily in the public sector). The current structure of policymaking around place branding in Tasmania (vertical, top-down) thus perpetuates power and hinders collaboration flows. This paradox between structure and collaboration highlights the tensions between branding as a tool to support economic development policy and as a process of democratic co-creation of place identities, the latter often unaligned with wider goals of the public sector (Eshuis & Klijn 2012, p. 137).

7.10.5 Lack of culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing

> *Tasmania is not a place that we can just simply take ideas from other places. [...] Often communities have never been involved in this type of process and are being led through this. I know they don't feel that they actually have a voice in these discussions which is really, really interesting.*
>
> *(participant 7, focus group II)*

Participants highlighted the lack of culture of collaboration as the key challenge they faced when branding Tasmania. Similarly, they recognised that silo efforts are costly since branding in isolation only serves particular purposes and is contested. The discussions led to the identification of several factors contributing to the perceived lack of collaboration. Such factors are explored in more detail below.

a. *Non-conducive environment*

Those participants in the public sector seemed unconvinced about the idea of a common purpose as a catalyst, arguing that perhaps the fabric of Tasmania was not an ideal conducive environment for collaboration to happen:

> [T]his [model] is only translatable or will only work if the sufficient number of those environmental attributes are in play (participant 17, focus group III).

This perception relates to issues of disillusionment or apathy towards governments' initiatives, resulting in lack of confidence in initiatives that would support change and collaboration:

> Lots of things are being backed by political figures lately and nothing's actually happened. I think there is a bit of disillusionment around that (participant 4, focus group IV).
>
> That's the confidence issue […] people's history and their relationships with people and trust (participant 2, focus group IV).

Participants also noted cultural features, such as fear of confrontation, that hinder the success of deliberative processes:

> For the system that you're posing here to work, there is the need of a major cultural change. Because communication is a big issue here. That's my experience coming from a different country. I've always found it really hard to communicate with people in the way people communicate, that fear to confrontation everywhere… (participant 13, focus group IV).

b. *Self-interest*

Mirroring the findings from the analysis of the in-depth interviews, participants argued in the interventions that stakeholders' self-interest was one of the main impediments to collaboration:

> They see self-interest as being best (participant 17, focus group III).[386]
>
> And [self-interest] is a biological and cultural thing (participant 5, focus group IV).

c. *Discussions potentially bring about slower decision making*

Participants with business backgrounds argued that a more flexible environment for collaboration is needed. They noted that the slow process of bureaucracy is often at odds with the fast pace of business and requires greater adaptability, as evidenced by the quote below:

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[386] Other examples include: 'They haven't felt safe and they have good reason to not to feel safe. So, whilst in theory it would be in everybody's interests […] someone has to kick the ball and have a bit of play first and no one wants to do that because they are exposing themselves' (participant 17, focus group III); [E]ven if in the end it would benefit everybody, it's gonna take extra effort, extra resources, to get from where you are now to that point, because you have to get out of a hump. And how do you get over that hump without something else, because it just won't happen (participant 17, focus group III); I think it is whether is either competition for the same costumer base or competition for a fixed pool of funding, I think that is where this becomes very difficult (participant 17, focus group III).

> I work for a medium sized privately-owned enterprise and I guess we act fairly quickly and nimbly and make changes. We don't tend to work with partners or other people because it slows down the process. […] some of the government processes and maybe even the university, I'm not sure, would be perceived to slow us down. So […] I can see that that's not a consolidated or community way to do things and we get involved with community bodies that are relevant to what we're doing. But in terms of what we're doing we're just getting on with it (participant 23, focus group IV).

d. Resistance to share resources, knowledge and practice

Participants representing the public sector argued that there have been attempts to foster collaboration, with little success. They recognised a perceived will and curiosity for collaboration but argued that there any many barriers to make those interactions effective:

> So there was a facilitated session […] with all sorts of people. It did not really go anywhere. And […] it is sort of a motherhood that everyone would like to help everybody else but they want to make sure that they are ok first, and therefore, you know, there was a genuine, let's go along and see about this, but then when it came to the crunch of actually then really collaborating, so people ended up retreating to their own corners a bit (participant 17, focus group III).

> Because there is no benefit (participant 6, focus group III).

Those participants in the public sector also noted the lack of governance skills of stakeholders outside of the public sector and advocated for partnership models as more suitable alternatives than participant-governed network models.[387] For instance, a particular PPP was mentioned to illustrate public collaboration in place branding processes:

> There was a project sort of like this. There was funding provided, contributed by a bunch of people, so MONA, UTAS and state government. The research project was the MONA EFFECT. It is kind of the study that you are talking about (participant 17, focus group III).[388]

The lack of a culture of engagement was then related to issues around shared responsibility and loss of accountability:

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[387] The delivery of public value is link to an understanding of development that goes beyond economic and social policies to reflect on a more holistic approach through which other aspects of a place, such as culture and traditions, are considered. Perhaps place branding is only useful and could only possibly work as a tool to create public value, but its application as an economic and social development tool are fraud and potentially unethical, given the commodification of culture inextricably linked to top-down processes of branding primarily focused on creating attractive images of the place to influence consumers to come, live or invest.

[388] The project on MONA effect is still a consultative version of stakeholder engagement. It was commissioned by the University of Tasmania (UTAS), the State Government, Local Government (Glenorchy City Council, city adjacent to Hobart) and the museum MONA as a research project on the effect of the museum and its festivals in the creative economy in Tasmania. The project was very much focused on the south of the state and particularly its socioeconomic pull-up effect in the capital, Hobart, were the museum sits. This 'project fractured' (participant 17 and 24, focus group III), and to their understanding, 'the report itself didn't come up with anything really useful' (participant 2, focus group III). The implication here is that stakeholder relationships fractured, even when there was a clear and common purpose for collaboration. With regards to the link with the network model posited in this research, this MONA effect case is not really comparable or applicable to this project, because the stakeholder alignment did not aim to operationalise participatory place branding, but rather to observe how synergies for economic development could be created, particularly around the arts and cultural sector, or creative industries. The project also failed to include and effectively engage many stakeholders, particularly civil society.

> Participant 2: Does the word hope summarise it? I guess it's also associated with literacy. Because you've got to have the literacy of engagement you know, to understand that you can make a difference.
>
> Participant 13: You've got to believe that you... That there is the ability out there to actually effect any local change.
>
> Participant 2: You've got some hope then.
>
> Participant 13: I think it comes with responsibility, learning that we're responsible.
>
> Participant 23: […] That's the same as for any kind of idea or business or anything like that. Once you accept the responsibility then you have this confidence come through and then you are autonomous (focus group IV).
>
> I think what we do is we build committees around projects so an idea bubbles up from somewhere. But what committees do is they diffuse responsibility and so all of a sudden nobody's responsible for this thing (participant 4, focus group IV).

Discussion: The data suggests that stakeholders strive to collaborate but find hurdles in the current hierarchical structure primarily due to lack of culture of collaboration and lack of flexible governance mechanisms to facilitate it. In this context, although the idea of leadership in the network might seem in conflict with horizontal modes of organization (see Chapter Four), the concept could be revisited from a form of management to a form of facilitation. Participants also acknowledged the complexity of finding a feasible model given the social, economic and environmental context of Tasmania (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). They concluded that there is a need for leaders as communicators, facilitators and managers of networks, since only they can instigate trust and legitimacy to place branding processes (Provan & Kenis 2007). In this sense, participants also recognised the advantages of networks to address multi-organisational governance issues that require greater coordination between sectors (public, private and voluntary), more efficient use of resources and greater knowledge sharing and learning (Provan & Kenis 2007).

7.11 Opportunities for collaboration

> *So, I have learnt a lot from that experience and I am now much more collaborative, much more understanding and accepting.*
>
> *(participant 1, in-depth interview)*

An initial emphasis on the features of the model that challenged the application of the model in Tasmania shifted towards a discussion about the potential benefits of collaboration. In fact, I argue that the intervention did indeed bring about collaboration, since participants engaged in knowledge-sharing aimed at solving the issues that may arise from the participant-governed model suggested. For instance, participants argued that often self-interest is actually based on a perceived state of 'competition' with other stakeholders, primarily for resources and public funding, although acknowledged that a focus rather on collaboration would ultimately bring better outcomes for all:[389]

> [T]hey are fighting over the shared space where they actually don't need to (participant 6, focus group III).

Despite their initial cynicism, and as the discussion progressed, participants engaged on strategic planning or decision-making debates for place branding. The interactions led to a recognition of the value of civil society's engagement, not only as a source of information, but also as a key partner in the Place Branding process. Participants also concluded that in fact the civil society might actually be more ready, willing and able to engage in the Place Branding debate that they originally envisioned. In this sense, participants discussed alternative partnership structures for greater engagement and started to refer to the stakeholders in Place Branding as a 'community', as highlighted in the quote below:

> People want to be involved, they want to be engaged. Sometimes we need to actually show them how that works and talking about that idea of partnerships. How some people do partner and some people do not. The entire community plan was based on partnerships because each organisation or group has strengths they can bring to the table if they're willing to work together (participant 8, focus group IV).

Participants then started to attempt to devise structures that would support the model's implementation or operationalisation:

> Just wondering about like the use of technology and maybe as a technological platform that would allow this system to function (participant 4, focus groups IV).

Similarly, participants reflected again on the importance of existing networks and social capital to leverage positive branding practices. In the example below, the participant refers again to successful private branding practices and the need of cross-sectoral collaboration illustrated by the case of MONA's establishment:[390]

> [MONA] is an example of something that catalysed collaboration between government and local artists, and a local philanthropist and a local museum (participant 13, focus group IV).

7.11.1 Alignment of branding message

Building on the opportunities that emerge from collaboration, participants argued that a main benefit of collaboration is the potential for greater alignment of brand messages:

> Participant 6: I would imagine that very quickly the conflict will end [with increased collaboration]. Because if you bring those two things together in a single message to a mass audience, you have a really powerful way to talk to people locally and intestate.

[389] The feeling of fierce competition and the necessity to protect participants own interests is sometimes more of a perception than a reality, there is real scope to collaborate, do different and continue to be successful.
[390] It is important to note the previous existence of a creative industry that supported the impact of the museum in Tasmania.

> Participant 17: But we need leadership for that to happen (focus group III).

In this sense, the one aspect of the model that generated more positive reactions between participants was, undoubtedly, the focus on setting up a common vision or purpose for the place based on its identity. Participants also noted that there is a set of environmental conditions needed underpinning collaboration as reflected on the quote below:

> Participant 17: By setting a vision though
>
> Participant 6: That's exactly right.
>
> Participant 24: Yeah, creating the environment (focus group III).

Participants supported a model that enables increased constructive communication through which a common understanding (not necessarily full consensus) can be reached:

> I think part of this is actually showing how the road map, sometimes you need to get in bed with the enemy to engage with them. Because actually you're not that far apart in what you're thinking. […] All of a sudden you actually get people from differing points of view talking and actually realise they're not that different after all (participant 8, focus group IV).

7.11.2 Changes in global trends reflecting a move towards collaboration

Participants representing the private and voluntary sectors argued that those engaged in formal place branding were concerned about increased collaboration as a result of conservative relationship-building patterns and emphasised that self-interest no longer has a place in a globalised world and that a focus on cooperation offers greater benefits than competition. Interactions and collaboration at a community level are necessary to maintain positive reputations:

> […] the kind of the old-school business culture […] That culture isn't the culture of my world […] ultimately my network, my community is not Launceston, it's not Tasmania. […] Generational change now happens as a result of people changing over time and new attitudes […] I'm seeing a lot of businesses that are getting involved in community projects, not because they see a particular outcome [..] That's a really crucial shift […] And zero-sum games of 'if I earn the dollar you don't earn the dollar'. As we transition into a more global economy, you are not counting how many customers are coming through your door versus just down the street necessarily. […] There's been a sense of there's one community. There's one network (participant 1, focus group IV).

Now focused on bridging impediments to the implementation of the model, participants highlighted existing collaborative endeavours and concluded that the structure of the network was not as crucial in the development of relationships for increased engagement, and that in fact the structure would need to be adapted to the circumstances of the place community:

> I'd argue people do try [to collaborate]. There's enough different organisations or organised groups of people that are well informed that actually tried to implement what that's about, argue about the

> success of it. So, the question is […] How do you get better effect from the networks that are in existence to put Tasmania on the map? (participant 8, focus groups IV).[391]

From the discussion, general agreement emerged about the potential role of government as facilitator:

> [T]he role of government, as I see it, is amplifying good things that are happening already. Telling the story, providing extra resourcing, helping out and it's not about kind of picking winners. It's about finding communities and cultures and leaders who are willing to put an enormous amount of time and energy into doing something. And then supporting them and helping them to navigate the system. Often it works in reverse. Projects get kind of announced and then they look for the people to help drive them (participant XXX, focus group IV).

> I don't think it should be government that comes up with the plan. I think government should be a key player in how the plan is actually actioned, but I think even there, government is an enabler. Government isn't a one stop kind of solution. (participant 9, in-depth interview).

7.11.3 Acknowledgement of the dynamism and richness of a place's identity

A city brand process is ongoing. It is not static. Neither is society

(Ooi 2011, p. 57)

The discussion about new modes or models of organisation, particularly within the private and not-for-profit sectors, including new modes of collaboration and collective impact, led to a recognition that place brands are dynamic and complex entities, the sum of multiple identities within a given place community:

> One is that there isn't one community, there are heaps of communities. If we are going to be effective in kind of creating a more cohesive community, it's not about pretending there's one community. It's about creating connections between communities […] There's not one brand. If Tasmania is clean and green that doesn't mean it can't be smart and creative. It doesn't mean it can't be other things as well, and sometimes it can be completely contradictory. Sometimes you can be known for two things that are the opposites of one another (participant 9, focus group IV).[392]

Participants also acknowledged the importance of a holistic place brand that permeates across all aspects of place and informs the experience of the place by visitors:

> People come here to see the place, go to an event, buy its products. For a range of reasons, but a really important one is the perception they have of how the place has infected if you like, those things (participant 17, focus group III).

Despite acknowledging the dynamic nature of place brands, participants engaged in formal attempts at branding Tasmania still favoured the idea of an easily manageable static set of attributes that are easily marketed to foreign publics. This selective practice points to short-term attempts to build image for specific purposes:

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[391] To contextualize the quote above, the participant was referring to sectorial groups, such as business organisations, which suggests that the participant is still embedded in the hierarchical model and the traditional leading roles, and regards businesses organisations as key stakeholders in place branding and development.

[392] Participant also notes: 'But it is a barrier to getting people on board' (participant 9, focus group IV).

> Because there is a core set of attributes about a place, and sure they are not forever and you can have a major disruption with them (unless something major blows up in your region and changes things a bit). But other than that, it will evolve, but for us here in Tasmania, there is a strong sense of a set of attributes that are relevant to a whole range of things, whether events, products, tourism experiences (participant 17, focus group III).

Participants' reflection on the selective nature of place branding led to a discussion about whether or not the core attributes of the place that form its identity are static in time, since societies cannot change radically to create different and more positive images:

> I think that the core attributes of Tasmania are really so strong and physical that they are still here, and that the people who came 30 years ago to go on a driving tour around Tasmania are still coming on a driving tour and many of their children are coming with their children to go on a driving tour of Tasmania (participant 6, focus group III).

In recognition of the richness and perceived strength of Tasmania's identity, participants also discussed the risk of commodification and assimilation that competitive strategies bring about:

> I actually think like everyone's trying to be clean green and if you go out and say you're clean green then people will you know, they're kind of sick of that. If you look at what we do in Tasmania, it's really hard sometimes to differentiate Tasmania from New Zealand because the marketing push is kind of the same in both places. We've got some of the same natural advantages but that doesn't mean we have the same identity. What's really interesting is when something like MONA happens and something just drops out of outer space and goes you know what? This is weird and interesting and different and nobody else has this, that's what then kind of catches people's attention (participant 9, focus group IV).

e. Existing collaborative models in Tasmania

The discussion over the potential for the model often moved into comparisons with existing examples of collaboration. Such collaboration in a more horizontal fashion in Tasmania seems to happen more often in non-government arenas, particularly in the private sector, given that stakeholders might have a common purpose and dispose of the necessary resources. Participants with public sector backgrounds showed general disbelief in collaborative models:

> I remember how much we used to struggle to find examples throughout the organisation where collaboration had worked, and I think we went and recruited one sort of quarterly think tank, and there was one example of collaboration, and then when we started digging more deeply into that collaboration it hadn't actually. It did work but it didn't achieve the results... it is just hard (participant 6, focus group III).
>
> I think it's patchy and there are a few good examples but I think it's patchy. So, it is a really good point talking about that (participant 17, focus group III).[393]

Contrary to their views, innovators and young vibrant leaders expressed high level of support on collaborative practices based on knowledge sharing, perhaps linked to their recognition of emerging models of cooperation in business.

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[393] Other examples include: 'In theory yes, but everyone's experience of this collaboration mechanism, mostly is bad. We wasted a lot of time with this and we didn't get anywhere' (participant 17, focus group III).

It seems that transitioning is happening in terms of just new business models coming in (participant 4, focus group IV).

However, those in the public sector noted that innovators are often not prepared to share Intellectual Property for fear of being copied:

Participant 17: They don't want to share what they are good at though because then they are worried that someone else will copy it.

Participant 6: And they don't want to say what they are bad at because somebody else will move into their space and make it a success (focus group III).

7.11.4 The opportunity of a threat

Despite having the capability and agreeing on the benefits of collaboration participants argued that only a major threat or opportunity will foster collaboration:

Rather than thinking about the structure that could be put in place to make it happen or the proposal of a leader, in my mind I think, just look at it as a sector, and what will motivate this to happen. At what point in history could you put your proposal forward and have it unilaterally accepted. Is that we either had a massive opportunity or a massive threat. Sorry to be so simplistic. But if Tasmania as a place and what brought money to this state, money and people, or made it go was under significant threat (participant 6, focus group III).[394]

However, participants seemed concerned with the dynamism of such particular events and the potential recurrence to old models of place branding. The implication here is that once the threat has passed, the drive to collaborate disappears:

There is a crisis, it's just a really slow gradual one (participant 4, focus group IV).

Participant 6: [S]elling the West Coast as a new concept bringing together eco-tourism, tourism, destination, promotion events...

All: yeah

Participant 17: But that in a way just that's not around putting Tasmania or the West Coast on the map, but an eminent threat.

Participant 24: It's like rebuilding a community.

Participant 17: So... so... yes when there is a crisis people will come together, but as soon as the crisis is gone there is no driver for them staying together (focus group III).

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[394] Participants continued to reiterate the same towards the end of the discussion, emphasising the unwillingness of the public sector to engage in collaborative practices due to the perceived failure of such processes: 'The question is: do we want to? Yes! Do we want to do place making better? Yes! Can we? Absolutely! Some of the best minds are in [state government] at the moment. [Organisation] only responds to one thing: to press go. And it has been really interesting as this [example of threat] has developed over the last 12 months. And that is imminent threat. […] and that is why we got involved' (participant 6, focus group III).

7.11.5 Revolution or evolution

In line with their observations through the in-depth interviews, participants agreed that change is necessary, acknowledging that the current system of branding the could improve. However, they anticipated a slow process of change:

> It will change. But I would say it won't change fast. Products change as well. Version 2.1 becomes version 3 with new features and so on (participant 17, focus group III).

The discussion then reconsidered the difficulty of enacting change within a hierarchical model:

> So, if there's an organisation or there's a group of people who are showing some promise and moving in a direction and developing a reputation. And we can amplify that and make that more well known, that's kind of where the top down supporter is most valuable. Where the top down support tends to flounder […] where a Minister's got a bright idea of tomorrow Tasmania's going to be known for X and so I'm going to invest all of this money over here. But there's no grass roots around it, there's no community, there's nothing there (participant 9, focus group IV).

Participants suggested an alternative model that removes the government from the centre or main leadership role will need to emerge from out of the political system:

> You need to almost create a space where [the political setting] is not relevant (participant 2, focus group IV).

Discussion: Participants recognised through the intervention the importance of collaboration in the open-ended and fluid co-creation process of place branding (Kavaratzis & Hatch 2013). They further argued that the interactive nature of place branding points towards evolutionary processes (Hanna & Rowley 2011) and cultural changes that require a change from top-down decision making to collaborative governance and decision-making. Thus, when participants reflected on the participant-governed model, they introduced collaborative concepts, such as 'collective impact' as a model to achieve mutual good. Inadvertently, their use of the notion of collective impact goes beyond devising marketing strategies to sell place to acknowledge that one-way promotional campaigns do not work since no single stakeholder has 'total ownership or control' over the place brand. Place branding requires inter-organisational governance and negotiation for strategising, implementing and managing place brands long-term (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, p. 114). Ideas of community and *collective* encompass a group of equals working collaboratively beyond the traditional hierarchical, power-dominated structures of place branding. In this sense, participants recognised that constructive communication changes, at the very least, perceptions of difference or competition. By sharing knowledge, participants reverse the zero-sum logic (Morgensten & Van Neuman 1974) to a democratic co-creative endeavour.[395]

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[395] Knowledge sharing in the network does not necessarily bring about consensus due to the strong influence of competition and zero-sum games. For more on the concept of zero-sum games and game theory, see Morgensten and Van Neuman 1947; Nash 1953.

Participants recognised that stakeholder engagement at all levels, particularly public-private partnerships, alongside leadership are success factors for place branding (Rainisto 2003). Through the interventions, they posited that the branding of places, due the dynamic nature of places, is different from other product or service branding contexts. It has to be open, resilient and fluid, since there is no 'once and for all' or 'one-size-fits-all' model (Baker 2007, p. 35; Hanna & Rowley 2011, p. 472; Kavaratzis 2012). Place branding embraces ambivalence and adaptability to fulfil its purpose as a tool for place development.

Finally, the discussion of the network model concluded that, despite the recognition that cooperation in a network would be highly beneficial, a set of impediments to its operationalisation need to be addressed. In addition, the discussion highlighted that an intervention that challenged the status-quo might be necessary, if a more revolutionary approach than evolutionary approach to governing Tasmania's place branding process was to occur.

7.12 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented and analysed the data from the sociological intervention. Data indicates that during the in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and post focus groups interviews there were duelling ideas and discourses. There was a tension at work between theoretically linking the idea of a more participatory approach to place branding, but an unwillingness by many to let go of hierarchical arrangements for many reasons. The data analysis highlights the emphasis on retaining power and the fears by some that the model will not work.

In the next chapter I engage in an elaborated discussion of the themes that appeared through the data collection where I linked the results back to the research questions and theoretical analysis.

PART III

REFLECTION ON THE CONDITIONS FOR AN INCLUSIVE NETWORK MODEL OF PARTICIPATORY PLACE BRANDING

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

> *I think we're not going to be able to change the political system any time soon. Probably the best thing that we could do is try and apply some pressure for people in power to support the leaders who are acting in the community. If there was a process in place for that, that would help to bring different people in the room. And then whatever came out of that process the government committed to and delivered. I actually think that could work, I think the problem is we play in a zero-sum game and is basically if I have a dollar and I give you a dollar I no longer have it anymore. We're not trying to grow the pie for everyone, we're dividing out the pie between us. It's invisible, all of the maths gets done somewhere else. […] I actually think that people would be able to figure that out and I don't think anyone would walk out of that room with nothing, I think everyone would walk out with something.*
>
> *(participant 9, focus group IV)*

The quote above summarises the encouraging support the alternative model introduced in the interventions received among participants. However, paradoxically, it also highlighted the Tasmanian dilemma: although in theory participants agreed on the need for place branding to move towards greater participation and the potential applicability of network governance as an approach that enables greater engagement, they acknowledged that, in practice, there are many barriers to its full implementation. The challenges are mainly around addressing existing power dynamics and breaking the status quo. This section reflects on the analysis further and resituates the findings in the theoretical framework underpinning this research. The discussion is structured following the research questions posited in this dissertation, namely:

- What are the interaction and communication dynamics between stakeholders in the process of place branding?
  - How and to which extent do stakeholders engage in place branding processes?
  - To what extent do stakeholders collaborate in their attempts to brand places?
- How can we operationalise participation in place branding processes?
  - Under which conditions is participation effective and legitimate in place branding processes?
- Do policy networks provide legitimate and effective governance arrangements for participatory place branding?
  - Are participant-governed policy networks more inclusive, participatory and effective governance arrangements to brand places?

The discussion concludes with reflections on the use of participatory action research to effect participatory place branding practices, and outlines the implications of this research for both the theory and practice of place branding.

8.2 Interaction dynamics between stakeholders in the process of place branding

> *I think it has to come from everyone, I think the conversation that is pushed from outside government is very important. And it pushes and pushes and pushes and if the kind of key gatekeepers in government and/or the institutions where power is, and the people in the leadership team don't listen to that and don't engage with it in a more meaningful way. And the brokerage of that is what I am interested in. There will be kind of revolution that people will push for. It's like the Arab Spring, right?*
>
> *(participant 20, in-depth interview)*

As argued along this research, when planning for more effective practices towards greater success and positive outcomes, we need to understand how the place branding network interacts and collaborates (Knoke 1990). The exploration of the Tasmanian case not only revealed the nature and constraints to interaction between stakeholders, but also the different understandings and interpretations of the aim of place branding. Stakeholder engagement was mainly hindered by a multiplicity of government organisations, the particular culture of (or lack of) collaboration of different organisations, and the rigidity of the existing hierarchical top-down branding structure (see Figure 24).

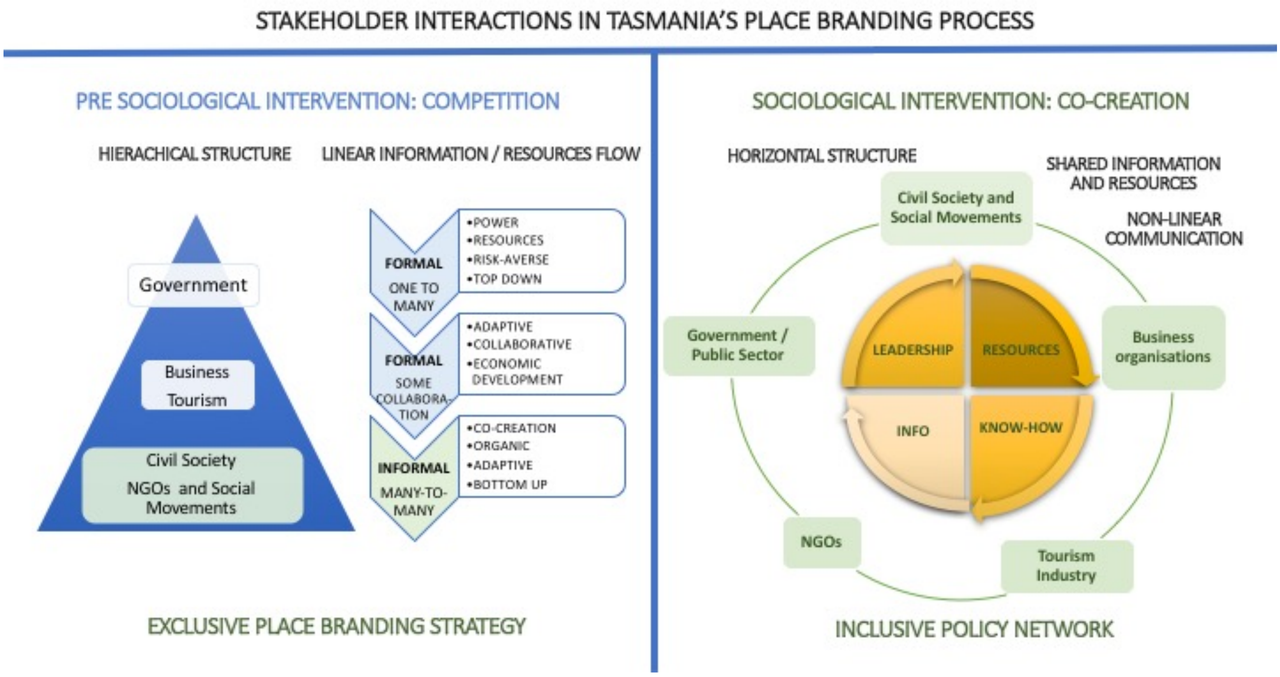

Figure 24. Stakeholder Interactions in Tasmania's Place Branding Process (Author's own).

In particular, public or formal branding in Tasmania was mainly conducted formally and unilaterally by government agencies (namely Tourism Tasmania and Brand Tasmania), with little engagement from the business and industry communities. Paradoxically, whilst participants representing the public sector noted that collaborative processes proved challenging since they involved a long and costly process of deliberation, those participants representing the business community and grass-roots organisations in particular noted that approval processes in the public sector were too slow and costly, and that if place branding was transferred out of governments they would see increased adaptability and resilience in line with the co-creative nature of the place brand and its dynamic and ever-changing nature (see Figure 24 above).

In the case of the destination brand in particular, a greater effort to collaborate and include industry members through engagement campaigns was noted, highlighting that the tourism industry in particular understands to a certain extent that place brands are co-created and that there is a need for greater engagement for alignment of message and efficiency. However, those efforts were still mainly tokenistic and consultative, and aimed at informing campaigns. Interestingly, private branding efforts, such as the case of MONA and its festivals, had a major impact and influence in place branding campaigns. Nonetheless, this impact was not the result of deliberate dialogue and collaboration between destination branders and the business to leverage exposure, but rather just happened.

Finally, residents were rarely consulted and mainly excluded from the process, although they were expected to be 'ambassadors' for the place (Braun et al 2013). Consequently, civil society felt a strong sense of apathy towards the process. However, citizens' willingness to change the status quo permeated the discussions, showing the potential and readiness for a cultural change leading to greater interaction and real engagement.

In this sense, the definition of a common purpose based on mutual understanding was then acknowledged and agreed upon by participants representing the different stakeholder groups as the best technique to ensure effective place branding processes. This realisation led to another key finding of the research, that the degrees of involvement of different stakeholders varies according to the political and socio-economic context in which place branding occurs. Once the context is removed and all stakeholders have an opportunity to share their views, collaboration can occur and there is a willingness to learn from each other and share resources towards more effective practices. There was a recognition, however, that removing the context might prove highly challenging. For instance, even within the Tasmanian state, northern and southern stakeholders noted crucial differences in their approaches to brand places. Similarly, those participants in the public sector noted several constraints to collaboration related to the structure in which they operate, including a risk-averse culture (typically found in public and governmental institutions) and accountability towards expenditure of public funds.

Consequently, I argue that engagement in the case of Tasmania was mostly of a consultative nature. Therefore, place branding processes in the state are mostly instrumental and outcome focused (for economic development or to increase tourism visitation in particular). Participants recognised, however, that the current practice could increase effectiveness if holistically or inclusively defined and based on collaboration towards economic, social and cultural place development.

In the exploration of Tasmania's branding practices, participants observed several issues during both strategic and implementation phases of the process. The issues where divided into *structural, contextual* and *cultural* issues. *Structural* issues related to the current main approach to branding, and encompassed the static character of the vertical and hierarchical, government-dominated decision-making process, as well as the challenge of managing a large number of stakeholders. *Contextual* issues were those related to the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of Tasmania (Chapters Six and Seven) and included a sense of apathy towards change, stakeholders' self-interest for survival alongside political issues, such as the north-south divide. Lastly, *cultural* issues related to existing collaborative or engaging practices in Tasmania, and featured a lack of communication and knowledge sharing, a lack of culture of collaboration between sectors (public, private and voluntary), and traditional understandings of leadership, power and authority linked to a dominant government role.

Expanding on the issues outlined and analysed in the previous chapter, participants detailed several concerns linked to the politics of place branding. The most salient were self-interest, fierce competition for resources (mainly financial) and an expectation that government is in charge of solving the problems of the state, despite surprisingly low levels of reported trust in the government's capacity to brand the state. This might be due to the fact that ownership of resources often results in increased authority in decision-making (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2010). Participants also observed a growing appetite for collaboration, despite recognising the failure of grass-roots networked governance projects like Tasmania *Together* (see Chapter Five), highlighting the necessity to develop a culture of collaboration to support alternative grassroots governance arrangements.[396]

The interventions showed that a shift to network governance can assist in strengthening capacity within the network to address complex issues, beyond short-term (cyclical) interventions serving instrumental purposes. Despite the resistance that the majority of participants representing the public sector showed to seeing their control mechanisms challenged by horizontal modes of

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[396] Participants also argued that Tasmania is undergoing certain changes perhaps leading to further recognition of the need for greater civil society engagement in political and policy processes. That recognition, however, finds great obstacles to permeate the formal branding institutions. For instance, although Tourism Tasmania attempted to strategically engage tourism stakeholders to 'own' the brand, the organisation restricted their participation in the branding process to informants (consultation), and failed to consider the potential of engagement in decision-making. This potential is two-fold. Firstly, it increases sense of ownership, and secondly it could result in policy and strategies that are easier to implement at the end of the chain. Ultimately, is the tourism industry, but also local residents and local businesses, that are in charge of delivering the tourism experiences promised by the place brand.

organisation, the rest of participants (and even some participants representing the public sector) argued strongly that decision-making power needs to be distributed among the stakeholders in the network for effective place branding. They indeed noted that self-governance and network governance are the most suitable avenues for true collaboration and participation to occur.

All participants agreed that, to foster communication and interactions between stakeholders in a participant-governed set up where the government does not facilitate or lead collaboration, there needs to be a strong focus on nurturing trust in a common purpose. They added that trust can only be achieved through meaningful leadership and high levels of accountability developed through dialogue.[397] Participants' perceived a need for well-known, successful and established leaders in the community in recognition of the importance of perceived competence as part cognition-based trust underlying relationships in the place banding network (Willem & Lucidarme 2014), which could in turn be linked to increased levels of accountability in the network, and effectively translate into more effective collaborative networks (McAllister 1995).

In addition, the Tasmanian case illustrated how fostering communication and engagement in the context of place branding has significant benefits for the network and supports inter-organisational trust (Giest & Howlett 2013; Klijn et al 2012; Van Ham 2008; Zenker & Martin 2010) through the reciprocal relationship between trust, communication, cooperation and performance (Kavaratzis 2012; Sepannen et al 2007). By communicating, trust is created and continuously enhanced.[398]

The intervention also showed that sharing knowledge and information not only has the capacity to reduce self-interest and uncertainty but can also inform stakeholders' strategies and similarly generate trust (Argiolas et al 2009). Furthermore, there was a recognition among participants that collective approaches can streamline efforts in place branding, promote resource sharing and consequently lower the costs associated with the implementation of place branding strategies, as well as increasing the coherence of overall strategies towards the collective aim of strengthening the reputation of a place. Finally, although collaboration for place branding in Tasmania seems to be mostly mandated by governments or public agencies, participants observed a willingness to work towards more collaborative models. The challenge in regional contexts, however, is how to manage strong communities and particular interests.

[398] Public management networks exist even when trust is low (Agranoff & McGuire 2003; Provan & Kenis 2007).

8.3 Operationalising participation in place branding processes

A participatory view of place branding can help the field become more embedded as a place development practice and steer clear of accusations of elitism, irrelevance and ineffectiveness.

(Kavaratzis 2012, p. 17)

In the theoretical development chapters I argue that enhancing participation in place branding is a challenging task that can only be delivered through organically-emerged and horizontal governance arrangements. To further test this proposition, this research has gone beyond attempts to engage civil society in consultative processes to explore a model that allows full stakeholder participation in decision-making processes, through the development and of an alternative participant-governed governance model for place branding that was tested in a quasi-real scenario through the interventions.[399]

This research aims to contribute to the debate on greater stakeholder engagement, especially of residents or the local community, in place branding processes to both advance place branding theory and assist practice (Braun et al 2013; Colomb & Kalandides 2010; Freire 2009; Insch & Florek 2010; Kavaratzis 2012; Olsson & Berglund 2009; Zenker & Seigis 2012). The analysis provided contributes to this line of research in a meaningful way, since it goes beyond analysing the role that residents play in the place branding process (typically as information providers) to explore further the constraints to and potential positive effects of their participation through the interventions. At the very least the research brought stakeholders together to discuss their engagement and interactions and outlined the issues hindering participation. Ultimately, it provided participants with the opportunity to come together to search for models that can provide solutions to further developing and maintaining meaningful and purposive interactions.

The intervention methodology used in this study outlined the large number of impediments to implementing a network approach and the meanings attributed to the idea of place branding. It also highlighted a gap between public, private and civil society actors in the desirability or potential applicability of the mode. Lastly, it provided an opportunity for civil society actors to engage in governance (albeit participants recognised that the development of the model will have to follow a slow evolutionary process).

The operationalisation of the model proved challenging. In particular, participants outlined a series of issues related to the participation of non-traditional stakeholders: lack of expertise; lack of understanding of the policy process; the challenge of accommodating different views or

[399] The *Be Berlin* campaign, for instance, engaged citizens to tell their personal stories to promote the city in greater consultative processes, but failed at creating a collaborative network based on continuous interaction to inform and develop place branding policy (Colomb & Kalandides 2010).

interests of many stakeholders, particularly the contested views of strong local communities and governments; gatekeeping and power struggles in the public sector hindering democratic participation; lack of a structure or overarching responsible organisation; and a perceived lack of accountability and legitimacy of self-governed processes. Overall, despite their 'in principle' support to collaboration, it proved hard to assess the extent to which public sector workers would support participation. The intervention demonstrated a change of attitude among public sector and government representatives towards what collaboration could bring in terms of managing accountability and legitimacy of the process. They acknowledged through their interventions that they do not have the capacity to 'do it themselves' completely since place branding does not respond to a particular intervention, action, policy or strategy, but is rather an organic process. However, they experienced difficulty in coming to terms with the prospect of letting control of the brand message and go with more inclusive decision-making arrangements. This could be in part explained by the above mentioned power-politics of place and their view of place branding as a tool or intervention as opposed to a continuous governance process.[400]

Nevertheless, participants also identified avenues for circumventing the potential impasses of collaborative processes. Solutions were mainly focused on enhancing democratic rights to participation and capitalising on a wealth of knowledge and expertise residing in the community. The acknowledgement of conflicting interests and perceived competition also led to the recognition of the mutual benefits that collaboration brings about, through more participatory processes and horizontal governance arrangements such as policy networks.[401]

Similarly, participants pointed at the need to revisit leadership to facilitate and empower collaboration (Agranoff & McGuire 2003, Folke et al 2005; Huxham & Vangen 2005). The type of leadership needed, however, was not to be found in government or public organisations, but rather in those individuals and organisations with enough social capital and *networking* capacity to convert cynical and disengaged stakeholders into effective collaborators.[402] The discussions around leadership in the interventions suggested that the role of governments in place branding

[400] By power politics I undersand tht place branding can be employed to serve specific political purposes within a narrative of place development. There was a clear patter among public sector workers to resist stakeholder participation. This is in part due to their role as public servants and the constraints of their everyday decision-making based on a change-averse and risk-averse administrative and managerial culture, particularly fearing backlash from particular actions or interventions if disagreement existed. This position was in contrast to the opinions of participants representing business and the civil society that advocated strongly for collaboration, understanding the need to pool resources for the common benefit.

[401] Participants traditionally engaged in regional development practices in fact alluded to what they considered similar collaborative models, based on participant-led decision-making processes, as an indication of an already existing push towards participation in policymaking.

[402] The issue of leadership has also been extensively discussed in literature on network governance, related to network management, especially in complex processes requiring complex interactions such as place branding, and to support mutual trust, transparency and accountability (McGuire & Agranoff 2011).

needs to shift from leader to facilitator (Kalandides 2011b; The intervention also demonstrated that adaptive governance models are needed to respond to the complexity of the process of brand co-creation, from political and social events, to media accounts, and civil society activism (Folke et al 2005; Innes et al 2006).[403]

Beyond observing issues around the suitability of policy networks as better governance arrangements for place branding, participants identified the need for more flexible and adaptable solutions to cooperation in place branding practices for three reasons. Firstly, it would better respond to the dynamic nature of places, their economies and societies. Secondly, it would address the fast pace of innovation in an increasingly globalised world, where international pressures, trends and changes led to volatile patterns of tourism and investment. Lastly, it could discipline the influence of media in the politics of place branding (Ooi 2004). The intervention highlights the need to further understand the relations and interactions of society in the place, as well as the negotiation processes and power structures (or 'power geometries') that lie within (Massey 2009). Participants agreed that greater stakeholder participation will lead to more flexible and resilient practices based on dialogue and knowledge sharing, to support a fluid identity, face potential changes and maintain authenticity. However, public-sector workers in particular expressed their lack of belief in an operational model allowing 'uncontrolled' participation, since they felt they could lose control over the outcomes and consequences, which could in turn result in difficult political situations to deal with.

8.4 Policy networks as legitimate and effective governance arrangements

Through the interventions this research demonstrated that the interactive nature of social networks and the co-creative process of place identity formation are in conflict with traditional conceptions of governance in place branding characterised by hierarchy and control (Kenis & Provan 2006).404 This case study illustrated how participatory place branding processes could work towards increased participation in practice, emphasising the potential for alternative bottom-up governance models to increase engagement and collaboration in the place community. However, as stated above, I acknowledge that a shift in governance models for place branding is seriously challenged by governments' interests and gatekeeping practices, among other issues. To further analyse the potential of network governance for place branding, in this research I explored and tested in practice a participant-governed policy network as a potential participatory

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[403] Brand management has to give way to collaboration and interactive dialogue. Only then self-organised networks of collaboration for collective action can support place branding practices.
[404] Provan and Kenis argue that the literature on networks was dominated by a 'functionalist argument claiming that networks are a response to failures of markets, failures of hierarchical coordination, and to societal and technological developments' (2007, p.233).

model for place branding in a quasi-real scenario.405 The interventions scoped the potential of policy networks to effectively include non-traditional place branding stakeholders, and in particular civil society, in the process of development and management of place brands.

Participants' insights pointed at the existence of mixed approaches to participation in the branding process. Despite their recognition of the flaws and lack of effectiveness of the current model, those participants with business backgrounds, for instance, not only favoured a top-down model supporting the *status quo,* but also displayed a higher sense of entitlement to be leaders of the place branding processes. This is due to their understanding of place branding as a tool for economic development. Similarly, most participants in the public sector also supported top-down place branding processes noting that, in light of the challenge of reaching consensus in the community, hierarchies are the most effective structures for efficient decision-making. Their choice responds to the pervasiveness of political will as well as governments' risk-averse nature, and this complicates participatory processes (Ind & Bjerke 2007). A policy network model will have to then take into account issues of power. Furthermore, governments have financial stakes as major funders of branding projects and are accountable for the use (or misuse) of public money. The network approach, however, suits civil society which not only supports more collaborative practices, but identifies with the socially constructed process of place identity co-creation and acknowledges the need for co-operation for the common purpose of collectively advancing the place. Despite the many issues and challenges associated with the practical application of policy networks as participatory governance arrangements for place branding, a general recognition emerged that every place has an existing place branding network that could benefit from inter-organisational or cross-sectoral collaboration and further engagement with external stakeholders, in particular with civil society. Policy networks in particular have the potential to provide superior governance arrangements to support participatory place branding processes.

Furthermore, the exploration of the policy network model, beyond testing its applicability, proved that any form of collaboration is indeed beneficial. For instance, despite a recognition that various perceptions on the place branding task lead to different expectations about the place branding processes (Braun et al 2013), by discussing the potential of operationalising participation through a participant-governed policy network in this research, participants were able to find a meeting point to examine their understandings of place branding and an avenue to work towards an agreement on the need for common purpose as a blueprint for their branding

[405] It is important to note, however, and as noted in previous sections, that the specific structure of the network will depend on the particularities of place, and that there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

activities leaving particular interests aside. The non–binding environment of the interventions, with no real consequences or expected outcomes, provided a relaxed atmosphere for meaningful discussions and an opportunity to challenge preconceived ideas. In addition, participants not only agreed on the need to move to long-term collaborative sustainable practices, they also discussed how this could be achieved by developing further network governance arrangements that better allow community involvement and participation, but also lead to shared responsibility and commitment.

With regards to the choice of a particular policy networks for the purposes of the exploration, I acknowledge that further research should adopt a more open-ended approach. The choice of Provan & Kenis' model determined a specific structure to be debated by participants. My intention, however, was to focus on the governance of the model instead, as well as to provide an example of alternative horizontal governance structure to foster discussion on participation and possibilities for the development of more equal fora for collaboration in place branding. In this sense, the main contribution of the project is not the proposition of a particular structure of policy network to operationalise participatory place branding practice, but rather the lessons learnt through the in-depth exploration of the potential of network governance arrangements for the operationalisation and advancement of participatory place branding approaches. Ultimately, this research project encouraged participants to consider their potential as a place branding network (Brincker & Gundelach 2005).

8.5 Participatory action research as a tool for operationalising participation

> *Whereas the aim of action research is to create social change, the intervention method does not aim at generating social change as such. Instead, its purpose is to create an understanding among collective actors of their potential for and role in social change.*
>
> *(Brincker & Gundelach 2005, p. 369)*

This case study, thorugh which I sought to understand the place branding process through collective self-inquiry reflecting on practice, validates the use of qualitative research, and in particular the case study method to explore and better understand complex and dynamic phenomena such as place branding. Furthermore, the research, I argue, proves that the methods used in participatory action research can become tools of participatory place branding, since the aim of those methods is to inform policymaking (Braun et al 2013).[406] The discussions undoubtedly informed policymaking. At several stages of the focus groups and interventions participants shared knowledge, insights and even resources and contacts. This is an indication

[406] Braun et al (2013), however, call for such models to be further tested to assess whether they could influence place branding practices and increase participation in the process.

that the intervention empowered the network to start a process of knowledge sharing and collaboration, and I note that anecdotally participants disclosed after the conclusion of the fieldwork stage that they had started to collaborate with some stakeholders differently, and they had also to put some of the ideas gained through the discussions into action. Some participants also revealed post focus group discussions that the reflexive process of the intervention assisted them in getting a bigger picture and realise the need for collaboration. They indicated that they have since then spread the message of the importance of collaboration among their stakeholder network, some reporting that they have also attempted to modify their practices towards a more holistic model of developing place brands in their specific industries or government areas, based on greater stakeholder involvement, looking more broadly to capitalise on the expertise and success of others.

On a theoretical level, I argued that effective place branding research calls for a multi-method approach. In this research, I combined the paradigms of critical theory and constructivism through a series of in-depth interviews and focus groups. The use of PAR, and in particular the method of sociological intervention allowed a process of data collection based on permanent reflection and debate aimed at encouraging change. Through the interventions, participants were empowered to foster existing and create new interactions to support knowledge exchanges in dialogue-based two-way communication processes. Greater interactions have a positive effect on existing communication dynamics and help mediate the power dynamics underlying such interactions. Coincidentally, the three participants that had an additional in-depth interview to discuss the model, all involved in formal branding practices, reistrongly endorsed the need for a vertical structure to fast-track branding campaigns.[407] Since they were not involved in the focus group discussions, the question remains as to whether or not they would have changed their views through participation in the interventions. A comparison between in-depth interview data and that of the interventions highlighted that participants in the public sector also changed their views towards a wider support for collaboration through the reflection on their practices over the course of the discussion.

In practice, in this study the use of participatory action research aimed at bringing stakeholders that are directly or indirectly involved and affected by place branding processes together to discuss a common issue. In addition to creating the environment for the discussion through the use of PAR, I found in the method of SI an avenue to observe participants' interaction dynamics

[407] Since these three participants were not able to attend the focus group interventions, I offered them a second in-depth interview to discuss their insights into the applicability of a participant-governed network model of governance in the Tasmanian brand network.

in action and to simultaneously empower stakeholders to enact change based on their collective advantages, in cooperative rather than competitive place branding processes for long-term success and sustainability of practice. Furthermore, Touraine's the method of SI not only assists place branding theory in understanding stakeholder interactions in processes of identity formation, but also operationalises in practice horizontal and open interactions, challenging traditional top-down hierarchical structures, and opening an avenue for collaboration and knowledge sharing. Participants' critical reflection on Tasmania's branding process(es) and the potential of an alternative governance agreement was indeed an open process of dialogue and open horizontal communication, where all stakeholders had equal say in their evaluation and aspirations of the common branding project.

Finally, I acknowledge that participatory processes are complex endeavours. Removing all environmental contextualization by setting up an 'artificial' case where participants had the freedom to speak freely about their branding experiences and the issues they encounter under Chatham House Rules is hardly replicable in real life. However, the intervention promisingly indicated that participant-governed policy networks can strengthen collaboration by enhancing communication and knowledge sharing and, more importantly, outlined a series of issues that will need to be addressed to develop more holistic models, in particular the complex policy context of place branding.[408] In the case of Tasmania, it appears that stakeholders are not dissatisfied with the status quo. Intellectually they support the idea of collaboration. However, they do not see the need to change the existing structure since, they argue, Tasmania has been successful in its branding attempts. Rather than discrediting the need for participatory approaches, these findings point towards an interesting dynamic occurring in Tasmania that overlays the power dynamic. In Tasmania, those in positions of power in the established formal hierarchical place branding network are not interested in change. However, the younger civil society is, since they are already coming together to create and collaborate in the network. Therefore, a network model for place branding that empowers civil society to participate will have to have a grass-roots character and evolve over time.

[408] The changes to the research design highlight the need for flexibility and adaptability in the process of place branding.

Lastly, the findings show that the model speaks to a younger generation of Tasmanians and that it is better suited to the characteristics of an emerging network society (in the network 3.0 generation). Consequently, I argue that the network model will have more appeal as the network society evolve and the younger generation moves into power, bringing changes in governance to a breaking point.

8.6 Implications of this research

Shared information supported by legitimate processes, coupled with mindful and purpose-oriented social action brings about change.

(Castells 1998, p. 359-360)

In recent times, place branding scholars have recognised the importance of holistic stakeholder engagement and involvement in place branding processes. However, the literature addressing participation in place branding process is in its infancy and theoretical findings supporting a shift to participatory practices need to be justified and supported by practical cases. Due to the current scarcity of attempts and examples participation in place branding in practice, it is thus of upmost importance to provide cases to further academic thinking in participatory processes as a tool for sustainable and more effective place branding practice.

The intervention presented here proved that place branding is a complex process that requires multi-player collaborative interactions (Innes et al 1994). The study also provides partial empirical confirmation of the application of network governance models and the resulting potential to increase the effectiveness of place branding processes by enhancing collaboration and knowledge sharing. The challenge ahead for scholars is to enhance accountability between network members in a structure of horizontal coordination (Boerzel 1998, 2006; Scharpf 1992). In this sense, there is perhaps an opportunity to further develop the model into a particular inter-organisational structure. This structure, however, might be subject to the spatial context and needs of place, since as Goldsmith and Eggers posit:

> An effective cross-organization knowledge management system can provide a host of benefits: It can help develop new knowledge, flesh out solutions to daily problems, enhance learning across the network, build trust and help people learn from each other's successes and mistakes. These capabilities can help government to better integrate and align its own strategic objectives with those of its partners (Goldsmith & Eggers 2004, p. 108).

From the issues hindering the development of participatory processes outlined by participants, a series of practical implications are presented. By better understanding the interactions, dynamics and environmental factors affecting the development of place brands, policymakers can efficiently design sustainable and adaptive place branding processes based on meaningful collaboration through network governance arrangements (Healey 2006). However, further research needs to observe closely the many challenges embedded in a move towards more inclusive processes to support greater stakeholder involvement for place branding, especially around the development of trust, enhancement of commitment and increase of shared ownership in the network. This includes a recognition of the impossibility to reach consensus at all times, and an emphasis of transparency and the mutual benefits of information sharing (Cleaver 2004; Holt 2003; Munday 2006). The exploration also revealed than the status quo is hard to break and that it might be only in the event of a crisis or failure the parties to a network can agree to sacrifice the right to pursue their own interests at the expense of others (Powell 2003). In addition, as argued through Chapter Four, there is an evident lack of trust between governments and civil society.

The case presented here advances further thinking into the many challenges associated with developing a feasible model for participatory place branding processes. I also argue the need to observe the place branding process in context. Region-specific traits to the branding process are often related to the particular politics of the place and underlying culture of collaboration in the network. The particular context of places includes a set of unique and complex economic, social and environmental characteristics particular to places. All those need to be considered on the debate and process of alignment of purpose for both place branding and place development practices.

Ultimately, the exploration tested the legitimacy of place branding as a tool for economic development. Arguably, in some instances, efforts could be better invested in community development for effective economic development. After all, place branding alone cannot act as a catalyst for economic development. A network governance model could in this sense bring together social and economic development through the very process of setting a common vision, purpose and understanding of the place and its identity.

Defining a common purpose for place development through dialogical two-way communication processes of co-creation of place identities requires self-organised and autonomous governance models. To further test this proposition, this research reviews and observes the many challenges for engagement and participation in governance processes (that have been widely documented at a theoretical level in the place branding and network governance literatures) in practice (Weare et al 2014).

8.7 Limitations of the study

Although the study presents an in-depth account of branding practices in Tasmania through a multi-method approach, the use of a single study is limited in its capacity to draw conclusions and generalisations on place brand interactions. The exploration is also inextricably linked to the particularities of the Tasmanian context. The particular struggles not only of the Tasmanian branding project, but of place management at large determined the in-depth exploration of particular narratives, to the detriment of an analysis of other aspects of the branding of places. The socioeconomic and political conditions of places at any particular point in time have a determining influence in the identification of the main purpose of branding (Kavaratzis 2012). Additional research should replicate the study by applying the methodological framework to a comparable setting. Replications of the study in different territories under different contexts could assist in identifying further trends and validate or invalidate the conclusions.

Given the limited time scope of the research typical of doctoral dissertations and the artificial set up (the alternative model proposed in this research was tested in a quasi-real scenario), the long-terms effects of preliminary collaboration in communicating and sharing knowledge in the place branding network could not be further quantified or reflected upon. Longitudinal studies on network governance models for place branding implemented in practice could provide a more sophisticated understanding of the potential pitfalls of collaborative models. Similarly, they could inform as the development of particular structures to facilitate collaboration.

Moreover, this study has focused on testing and exploring a particular model for engagement: participant-governed policy networks. Since there are many alternatives to the chosen model to support network governance arrangements, further explorations based on alternative models would allow cross-case comparison that will deepen the reflection on the operationalisation of participatory place branding approaches.

Finally, although the sample is representative of the place branding network in Tasmania, caution needs to be applied when drawing generalised conclusions of small samples. In this sense, I note again that the aim of the study was not to generalise findings but rather to gain insights into the applicability of network governance models to place branding processes.

8.8 Further research

Despite a recognition of the importance of engagement for effective place branding practice, as noted above, stakeholder interactions remain understudied (Hankinson 2004). Drawing from the disciplines of place branding, communications, sociology and governance, the case study presented in this research reveals new insights into participation in the place branding process.

The study emphasises the importance of gaining in-depth insights into stakeholder interactions in the process of place branding. It also informs the development of place brands.

This case study illustrates an exciting avenue for further development of holistic place branding practices. It suggests network governance as an approach that supports a more flexible, adaptive, sustainable and democratic place branding process. From the discussion above, I argue that future research on stakeholder engagement could enrich place branding theory and practice by focusing on the following aspects:

- Firstly, it is important to further study stakeholder interactions and the underlying power politics underpinning place branding processes towards more flexible and adaptive governance models for place branding.
- Secondly, branding needs to be observed and comparatively analysed in a larger variety of territories with different environmental contexts (from cities, to nations, to interregional settings), to observe the differences in stakeholder interactions and engagement (place politics) at all levels. By analysing a wider range of territorial brands common patterns and issues could be acknowledged and further developed into network governance models adapted to the particularities of the place.
- Following the development of a framework for stakeholder interactions, the specific characteristics of place branding as a policy process need to be observed. Understanding the power struggles further could advance the operationalisation of participatory place branding. This includes a further understanding of not only political, but also social and cultural struggles and ethical dilemmas around democracy, legitimacy and commodification of some aspects of place identities.
- Furthermore, the recognition of the governance challenge underlying place branding processes and the exploration of policy networks as enabling governance arrangements for place branding processes have allowed the emergence of a discussion on place ownership and legitimate practices.
- Finally, the examination of participation action research and, in particular, the method of sociological intervention as a tool not only to analyse settings but to empower communities to enact change. A focus on interactive modes of inquiry also provide an exciting breakthrough towards the operationalisation of place branding practice. By providing a meeting point for dialogue towards a common purpose and collaborative decision-making the interventions proved that under the right environment participatory place branding is possible.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

This research was motivated by my concern about the constraints and instrumentality of top-down approaches to place branding. Such approaches, I argue, overemphasise marketing tools and principles to manage place reputations, fail to recognise the complexities of branding places due to their dynamic nature as socially constructed entities and lack holistic stakeholder engagement. In addition, such approaches fail to recognise that place branding is a much broader process, a genuine governance process that requires more inclusive approaches.

Through a critical review of the literature I posit the need for a more flexible and adaptive place branding process that better reflects the communicative exchanges underlying the formation of place identities. Consequently, I argue that place branding should evolve beyond short-term interventions based on marketing and promotional campaigns into a tool for policymaking to support long-term place development.

A review of the literature relevant to place branding confirmed a lack of clear conceptual framework to guide practice and the limitations of existing top-down approaches. In an attempt to further understand the dynamism and complexity of places beyond branded products, I examined the co-creation process underlying place brands as socially constructed entities. I drew on the communications and sociology literatures to argue the need for alternative governance arrangement that better reflect the organic nature of place identities allow greater stakeholder engagement. Simultaneously, I drew parallels with processes of brand communication in the network society. I then concluded that the lack of stakeholder engagement is at odds with the democratic process of co-creating place identities. Therefore, place branding represents a governance rather than a marketing challenge. I then situated my theoretical framework in governance and set out to better understand stakeholder interactions underlying place branding in order to develop an inclusive governance model that allowed greater stakeholder participation.

Under this theoretical framework and research design I situated place branding in a wider analytical context as a tool for social, cultural and economic development, and participatory place branding as a flexible and adaptive approach to collectively and continually support a holistic co-creation process of the place identity to enhance a positive reputation for the place. I then argued that the development of more inclusive governance arrangements will increase the effectiveness of place branding and assist the management of place reputations.

More specifically, the overall research aim was to explore the interactional dynamics between stakeholders underlying processes of co-creation of place brands and to investigate the potential for policy networks as superior governance arrangements for participatory place branding. The choice of participant-governed network governance model in particular draws primarily from the

the literatures of network governance, place branding, communications and sociology. The model presented to participants supported a more participatory, flexible and sustainable approach that aligns with and mirrors the co-creation process of place identities through horizontal communication exchanges in the network society, thus counteracting the instrumentality of hierarchical, vertical, static and short-term place branding processes.

More specifically, I set to investigate further stakeholder interactions in place branding processes to better understand the underlying communication dynamics and to outline the necessary conditions for participation in place branding, and I explored network governance as an alternative approach to operationalise participatory place branding. Following an extensive review of participation and collaboration in network governance models I posited that policy networks are superior governance arrangements for place branding practices and aimed at exploring their applicability through a case study of Tasmania.

A secondary aim of the study was to explore participatory action research, and the method of SI as research tools to empower stakeholder collaboration through grassroots interactions, fostering knowledge and resource sharing, and allowing a platform for debate on alternative (participatory) network governance models. Using participatory action research combined with the method of SI, I explored stakeholder interactions and the potential of an alternative network governance model through a series of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions and interventions. By using PAR, I adopted a double role of theorist and practitioner. In particular, the method of SI allowed me to engage with the place branding community to better understand the issues they face and envision new avenues to advance participation in place branding. The SI and PAR techniques were therefore crucial to the engagement of stakeholders. I note, however, that in this research I appropriated many elements of Touraine's (1978) sociological intervention method to develop my own interpretation of his method. Replicating this kind of approach will be key to recognise SI as a key methodological tool to observe stakeholder interactions. The method of SI provides participants with something to spark the debate (in this case, the proposed alternative participant-governed network model) and succeeds in providing a rich output. Ultimately, the interventions succeed in bringing stakeholders together to discuss the common issues they face.

9.1 A review of the methodological framework

In the introduction, I argue the multidisciplinary nature of the concept of place branding and the need for holistic approaches to support stakeholder engagement for effective place branding. I then outline my quest for a commonly accepted underpinning theoretical framework for the young discipline of place branding. In particular, I reflect on a traditional focus in the literature on branding as an economic development tool, echoing management and corporate theories and concepts. Theoretical attempts to establish the field have therefore been based on the marketing and management literatures and focused on the notion of competitiveness and the need for building distinctive place brands to promote territories and their products. As the review of the evolution of the field reveals, the difficulties associated with the application of corporate principles for products to places due to the dynamic and complex nature of place identities, signals the instrumentality of hierarchical models of place branding, and explains the lack of success measurement frameworks. A renewed emphasis on the socially constructed character of place identities through communication exchanges has led scholars to focus on the relational aspects of place brands. In particular, the interest in the place brand construct as a socially co-created (constructed) and dynamic concept called in turn for renewed attention on the communicative aspects of place brand identities, particularly in the context of the network society, and following ICT developments and the rise of the public sphere. In this context, new horizontal, non-linear modes of communication have opened up two-way communication and have facilitated informal branding by civil society. Such informal and organic patterns of communications, however, are often in disconnect with formal branding messages, which can lead to a multitude of often contested messages about the place. This new pattern of co-creation of meaning, away from controlled and manufactured advertising campaigns, have challenged traditional hierarchical and vertical one-way place branding processes, often led by public agencies with the aim to foster economic development.

With the recognition of the multi-stakeholder co-creation process of place brand identities, I argue a need to observe stakeholder engagement patterns and communicative interactions in the process of place branding for more effective practices. In this sense, a review of the literature revealed a recognition of the importance of stakeholder engagement in decision-making for effective place branding, that has resulted in a recent interest in participatory forms of place branding. However, participatory place branding processes, I argue, will require more flexible and adaptive governance arrangements capable of supporting greater interaction and collaboration. Hence, I introduced policy networks as alternative governance arrangements for participatory place branding, allowing greater stakeholder engagement in decision-making processes through collaboration and knowledge sharing towards a common purpose.

9.2 Towards inclusive, holistic and mindful participation

This research project constitutes an exploration of place branding practices in the region of Tasmania. An investigation of current place branding practices and stakeholder interactions in Tasmania under the current hierarchical model was followed by an exploration of policy networks as effective governance arrangements for participatory place branding practices.

The case resulted interesting due to Tasmania's dynamic, highly political and often contested place branding process. The interactions between formal public or institutional branding practices, including tourism and country-of-origin branding, along with informal branding, primarily from the environmental movement and media accounts provided the context to test the applicability of alternative governance models.

In Tasmania, the government adopted place branding formally in 1999 and has since them attempted to create an 'umbrella place brand' to be endorsed and utilised by businesses and public agencies to support economic development, increase exports and investment, and affect an overall positive reputation. However, despite the apparent success of formal place branding, the public or institutional brand was more the result of the worthy effort and performance of economic actors of the region, from food producers to industries, supported by their high quality of produce and excellent practices.[409] Despite leading actors (involved primarily in public branding) perceived success in branding practices based on their own key performance indicators (visitation numbers, exports and trade figures, and media and publicity outreach), decision-making and strategising has been conducted almost in silos.

The Tasmanian case also highlights how, despite efforts by public agencies to control the brand, the place reputation is affected by organic two-way communication patterns in the network society, resulting in informal branding mediated and amplified through media. In particular, the case outlined the dynamism and constant changes of place brands through the effects of the environmental movement and activism on formal branding attempts.[410] In the case of Tasmania, the contestation between formal and informal branding results in a myriad of contested messages that ultimately lead to an ambiguous place brand.

The interventions provided a rich account of stakeholder engagement and strategies, allowing a better understanding of their relationships in the place branding network. However, despite a recognition of the co-creative nature of place identities and the need for more holistic models for participatory place branding, the Tasmanian case showed limited co-creation in practice. This

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[409] The tourism brand, based on consumer perceptions, recognises in its brand architecture/structure the increasing role of services completing the high quality product, particularly related to the creative industries, and therefore opted to move from a traditional branding based on high quality to project a quirky and creative brand to support visitation to the state.In this respect, the aim of Tourism Tasmania was to differentiate Tasmania by enhancing the uniqueness of Tasmania's identity, based on the quirkiness of its inhabitants, reflecting perhaps better the reality of the territory, but still cemented into the high quality and pureness of its produce. See www.discovertasmania.com

[410] It is important here to recognise that this study, since it aims at observing the process of decision-making and place brand development, does not include the views of consumers of the place. I acknowledfe the importance of observing reinterpretations of the place identity and the importance and influence of consumer perceptions and brand associations for place branding, in here I focus on the internal audiences and the process of decision-making in place branding processes, towards a more holistic model of collaboration to enhance positive place reputation. I have purposely chosen to not observe consumer's perceptions since my focus is not on observing the brand image or the representations of the place brand in the minds of the consumer, but the formation of place identities, the dialogue and interactions underpinning the creation of a common identity for places.

perhaps points to a lack of maturity of the field that might have been overemphasised in the literature.

The examination of stakeholder interactions in Tasmania's place branding led to the exploration of the applicability of an alternative governance model for place branding practices through a series of focus groups interventions. Participants' accounts provided an outline of struggles and constraints to collaborative place branding processes, as well as a set of environmental conditions required for the success of such processes, and in the end with a set of opportunities for collaboration that could inform further research.

Beyond insights into how stakeholders perceive their engagement and that of others, the exploration outlined some important environmental factors required for holistic place brands to develop and succeed, based on issues around stakeholder engagement at the political, economic and social levels. Finally, the analysis of the Tasmanian branding project emphasises that place brands are dynamic, complex, long-term projects that require participatory, more adaptive and sustainable governance models. The study then reflects the necessity to develop adaptive participatory processes to respond to constant changes and major reputational risks.[411]

The case exposed some of the main mechanisms at play in processes of place branding that are particular to the context of each place. If power-relations based on hierarchies, or access to resources, do hinder participation, it is important to find alternative structural models where such tensions can be eased or ideally removed. I therefore conclude that in place branding processes, hierarchies obstruct interactions between stakeholders in place branding processes and that there is a need to further develop alternative arrangements. This validates the need to look into alternative more inclusive and horizontal modes of governance.

Furthermore, I conclude that that there is no one-size-fits-all collaborative model that could inform place branding processes. Even more importantly, that the ever-changing nature of places results in different needs at different times, requiring adaptation of governance structures or models. Reflecting on the Tasmanian case, it can be argued that the branding process is affected by numerous environmental factors and actors, such as the environmental movement, the arrival of (brand) MONA into the state, or game changers such as the visit of the Chinese President in 2014 which resulted in a spike in tourism visitation due to widespread publicity back in China.

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[411] I.e. in the case of Tasmania, environmental activism campaigns and media accounts influencing political decision making, policymaking and place branding.

9.3 The governance challenge of place branding

The purpose of this study was to reach a deeper understanding of stakeholder interaction dynamics, decision-making processes and, more generally, the conditions under which participation in place branding may occur in regional settings, through an exploration of the interactions between actors in the place branding network in Tasmania. The exploration revealed not only that a top-down, hierarchical place branding processes exclude participation from some stakeholders, particularly civil society, but also that it failed to recognise and respond to the complexity and dynamism of place identities.

Place branding theory needs to widen the scope from a neoliberal view of economic development based on distinctiveness and competition, to acknowledge the dynamism and flexibility of place identities, towards a focus on inclusive models for collaboration towards social, economic and cultural development. The findings of this research suggest that practitioners need to observe place brands as more than a marketing exercise to promote a place, and acknowledge their potential to support regional (and place) development. Such potential can only be realised through holistic, flexible, adaptive and participatory governance approaches in which stakeholders interact and collaborate in a more equal-to-equal platform away from existing hierarchical models. The underlying rationale for such interactions is two-fold. First of all, in order to succeed in affecting a positive reputation, place brands must be based on a collective understanding of place identities. Furthermore, the space of global competition requires alternative thinking towards shared-resources and co-opetition, rather than siloed efforts to influence the image of a place in the minds of consumers. A strong place brand is not an attractive logo, but a resilient network of actors collaborating towards a strong identity.

In this dissertation, I argue that the development of policy networks as adaptive governance arrangements to respond to the ever-changing nature of places and the complexity of their branding processes could assist the dialogue and cooperation needed for more sustainable, resilient and ultimately participatory place branding. The findings of the case support that policy networks do offer the conditions for the collective development of adaptive place branding. They provide a platform where different levels of decision making and implementation or action can meet to develop a common purpose that ultimately leads to alignment of messages and greater effectiveness of practice. Finally, policy networks as more holistic governance models provide a platform for the public (traditional) branders, the private and voluntary sectors, and civil society to come together to support place branding at a grass-roots level. Caution needs to be applied here, since this is a single case study and the empirical work covered a short period (2 years). Longitudinal research and cross-comparison with other cases would shed further light onto the impact of alternative models in overall place brand governance. Finally, in this dissertation by focusing the debate on place brands from a marketing to a communications perspective, the findings have highlighted and validated earlier research on the importance of observing place branding as a continuous and evolving dialogical process. In this process, governance plays a key role in supporting the inclusive organisation of actors towards a common purpose: a strong place identity that supports an effective place brand.

APPENDIX 1. SAMPLE BREADOWN

Total sample: **24** participants				
Gender*	**Origin**	**Private Organisations/Groups**	**Public Sector**	**Sector/Industry**
10 Female	16 Tasmanian	Arts Organisations	Local government	Arts / Entertainment
14 Male	7 of non-Tasmanian origin	Business Organisations	Regional government	Business / Trade
0 Other	6 born overseas	Civil Society	State government	Communications / Media
	1 from Australia other than Tasmania	Events & Festivals	Federal government	Consultancy /Training
	12 (50%) lived abroad	Hospitality Associations and convention Centres	Branding Organisations	Education: Secondary, Tertiary
	12 (50%) has never lived outside Tasmania	Large private Businesses	Destination Management Organisations (DMO)	Events
		Professional Development Institutes	Tourism Industry Council	Environmental management: forestry, hydro, et.
		Private cultural organisations	Economic Development offices	Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
		Secondary Education	Service providers	Infrastructure: construction, design, architecture, planning
		Small and medium-sized companies (SMEs)	Public Arts organisations	Marketing and branding
		*NGO	Sustainability Management	Not-for-profit
		* Community Development		Producers / Growers
				Research & Advocacy
				Tourism / Hospitality
				Transport & Freight

* In Tasmania, there are generally more males employed in decision-making about branding the state and related to economic development activities, thus representing a major portion of the sample.

APPENDIX 2. PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND BREAKDOWN

This appendix provides a breakdown of participants' backgrounds to the best of my knowledge. Since participants were particularly chosen because of their diverse backgrounds, they are often listed in more than one category. For instance, if a participant has worked as a private consultant, academic and now holds a position in state government, he or she would be listed under the categories 'government', 'state', 'private consultant' and 'tertiary education'.

PARTICIPANTS PER CATEGORY	CATEGORIES
3	**1) Politician**
8	**2) Government official**
3	a. State
4	b. Local
3	c. Regional
11	**3) Public servant**
9	a. Public organisations
4	i. Tourism
5	ii. Branding
4	iii. Regional development
4	iv. Community Development
3	v. Urban Planning
2	b. Government Business Enterprise
4	c. PPP: others
6	**4) Arts and cultural industries**
5	a. Public organisations
4	b. Private organisations
3	**5) Civil society**
6	**6) Education sector**
1	a. Primary and Secondary Education
1	b. Vocational Education
3	c. Tertiary Education
15	**7) Business sector**
8	a. SMEs
3	b. Large companies
2	c. Investors
5	d. Business associations
10	e. Private consultants
3	**8) Youth**
1	a. Student community
6	**9) Not-for-profit**
5	a. NGOs
3	b. Charitable organisations

APPENDIX 3. INFORMATION SHEET

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University of Tasmania

School of Social Sciences – Politics and International Relations

Information Sheet – Interviewees and Participants of Focus Groups

Title: Inclusive Policy Networks for Participatory Place Branding:
Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement
Using an Action Intervention Methodology

You are invited to participate in a research study on the way practitioners are 'putting places on the map', particularly the way Tasmania has gone about projecting an image and reputation to other territories and publics.

This study is being conducted in partial fulfilment of a PhD degree for Laura Ripoll Gonzalez under the supervision of a team of researchers from the School of Social Sciences at the University of Tasmania: Assoc. Professor Fred Gale and Professor Libby Lester.

The objective of the study is to provide an account of the issues around the way places are put on the map and explore the motivations, particular interests and sometimes contested agendas and strategies behind the traditional marketing and branding (image and reputation) approaches. It also aims to obtain practitioner responses to an alternative approach to putting places on the map based on the literature on public diplomacy and the network society.

A cohort of 12-15 participants representing diverse stakeholders involved in strategising and implementing different approaches to putting places on the map will be invited to share and discuss how they go about putting Tasmania on the map, what they perceive the results of their approach to be and the key issues they confront. Participants will be then invited to reflect on an alternative, networked model for putting places on the map developed by the researcher from a detailed review of the public diplomacy and network society literatures.

In doing so, the study aims to assess academic research claims concerning the instrumentality of the marketing and branding approaches for places, the problem of conceptualising and measuring 'success', and the issue of communication and collaboration among stakeholders. The research will pilot an alternative, Public Diplomacy approach based on the idea of establishing nonlinear, collaborative networks of stakeholders that better facilitate two-way communication and negotiation of common goals and agendas for putting places on the map.

You have been invited to participate because you are or have been directly involved in the process of putting Tasmania on the map. The research involves both in-depth interviews and focus groups as explained below. You are requested to participate in your personal capacity, not as a representative of your organization.

The research stages:

1) Individual in-depth interviews that last approximately one hour will be undertaken at the start of the project. At the interview you will be asked a series of questions about your experiences and involvement in putting places on the map.
2) Focus Group 1 (max. 2 hours): in the first focus group session, participants will be asked to share their experiences, basically the information they communicated in their in-depth interviews, to a group of 12-15 people, mainly practitioners, representing different stakeholders involved putting Tasmania on the map.
3) Focus Group 2: Researcher will facilitate a discussion of the different approaches taken by the participants to putting Tasmania on the map. Participants will seek clarification and further explanation of particular actions, interests or contextual factors that influence or justify the approaches taken by different stakeholders. The discussion will also canvass possible solutions or suggestions for collaborative action.
4) Focus Group 3: participants will review the minutes of the previous focus group discussion and the Researcher will then introduce a 'network model' for putting Tasmania on the map, which the group will consider and discuss.
5) Focus Group 4: Researcher's findings will be presented to all participants for further discussion and consideration.
6) Interview 2: a final wrap up interview with each participant will be held. At the interview you will be asked a series of questions about your experience and views at the completion of the research process.

Important dates. The interview and four sessions of focus groups will be scheduled as follows:

- In-depth interviews from August 15 to September 15 2014.
- First focus group intervention (state-of the art): around September 20, 2014.
- Second focus group intervention (discussion of narratives): around October 10, 2014.
- Third focus group intervention (problem-solving and presentation of networked model) around October 20, 2014.
- Forth focus group (presentation of researcher's findings and discussion): 15 June 2015.
    - 2-week period to develop final transcripts of forth focus groups
- Final approval of transcripts (optional) emailed to those participants interested: 1 July 2015.

Location and duration of the sessions

The venue of choice will be a meeting room in the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay Campus, Hobart.

To facilitate your attendance and minimize time off from work, the maximum time estimated for the interviews and each focus group session of focus groups has been set at two hours. At the end of each meeting there will be an opportunity for you to debrief and/or express any concerns you may have to the researcher.

Participating in this study should involve minimal risk to groups and individuals although it is possible some may experience a degree or anxiety or discomfort in recalling specific events or experiences of a conflictual nature. You are asked to consider this matter before agreeing to participate in this research and inform the researcher of any concerns you may have.

It is also important for you to understand that, although you will be involved in focus groups discussions around strategising and problem-solving about the way places are put in the map, you are engaging in a theoretical exercise, are not committing to taking further action, and do not have to respond to any proposed measures or outcomes.

Should you need or desire to access counseling services, Beyond Blue can be accessed via phone 1300 22 4636, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decided not to participate. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. There will be no consequences to your relationship with the University of Tasmania and the researcher if you decided not to participate.

Should you decide to withdraw, all non-approved data will be removed from the study and destroyed. However, previously approved interview and focus transcripts will not be deleted as they will have been already used as inputs into the analysis.

During the study, all research data will be stored in a password-protected hard drive, and in a locked cabinet at the Newhnam Campus of the University of Tasmania.

The audio recordings of the interviews and focus groups discussions will be permanently deleted once the transcripts have been written up. Then the Researcher will store the copies in a locked filing cabinet at the Newnham Campus of UTAS. Only the research team will have access to the files.

The research data will be stored for 5 years from the date of PhD Dissertation at the University of Tasmania and then deleted permanently unless the researcher applies for permission to re-use the data in another project, in which case you will be notified and your permission sought.

All the information you provide will be treated in a confidential manner, and your name will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. To protect your privacy and confidentiality, random codes and pseudonyms will be used to replace individual and organisational names.

Although every effort will be made to protect your privacy and confidentiality, the study cannot guarantee anonymity. In a study of this nature, where participants may know or be related in some way to other participants, there is a possibility of re-identification. This can occur when participants share a particular knowledge of an experience or event, or provide an account of an experience or situation that another recognises. You are asked to consider this possibility when assessing what re-identification may imply for you personally. Should you participate, you will be given the opportunity during and after the interview stage and at each focus groups discussion stage to review all information you have supplied, to alter or withdraw any or all the comments at your discretion prior to finalization of the interview and focus group transcript

It is also important for you to understand that the confidentiality of the focus group discussions cannot be guaranteed. While the researcher will ask all participants to adopt Chatham House Rules and keep all the focus group discussions confidential and within the group, such confidentiality depends on the good will of participants and cannot be guaranteed.

The results of this study will be published as part of the student investigator's PhD dissertation and aspects of the research will also be published in the form of academic journal articles and books.

The PhD dissertation will be deposited at the University of Tasmania (electronically) and an executive summary of the results will be made available to all participants via email upon completion of the project, estimated at August 2016.

Please note that your identity will be protected by the use of codes and pseudonyms when quoting interview and focus groups data and in the aggregated data tables and analysis across all publications.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study, the Researcher (Laura Ripoll Gonzalez) will answer any questions or go over any concerns you might have. She can be contacted at her Graduate Office at the University of Tasmania campus of Newnham, in Launceston on (03) 6324 3254, or via email at Laura.RipollGonzalez@utas.edu.au

You may also contact the Chief Investigator, Assoc. Professor Fred Gale by email Fred.Gale@utas.edu.au or telephone (03) 6324 3376.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 6254 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You might need to quote the following ethics reference number: H0014214.

This information sheet is for you to keep and, after reading all the information contained in this document and asking the necessary and relevant questions to the researchers, you will have to contact the researcher at Laura.RipollGonzalez@utas.edu.au and express your interest for being involved. Then you will be forwarded and will have to fill and sign a consent form where you declare you understood what the study is about and you are ready to take part, and the researcher will schedule your first interview.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

APPENDIX 4. CONSENT FORM

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University of Tasmania

School of Social Sciences – Politics and International Relations

Consent Form – Interviewees and Participants of Focus Groups

Title: Inclusive Policy Networks for Participatory Place Branding:
Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement
Using an Action Intervention Methodology

Date: ___________

Consent Form – Interviewees and Participants of Focus Groups

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study involves participating in an interview lasting no more than 2 hours and 4 focus groups with a maximum duration of 2 hours each. I understand that the interview and focus groups will be audio-recorded. I also understand that I will receive a copy of the transcript of my interview and minutes of each focus group and be given the opportunity to correct and errors of fact or interpretation.
5. I understand that research data gathered from me for the study may be published if the study does not identify me as participant.
6. I understand that any information I supply to the researcher will be used only for the purpose of the research.
7. I understand that while measures to protect my privacy and confidentiality will be put in place for the study, these may not guarantee my anonymity. This risk has been explained to me with satisfaction.
8. I have considered the potential risks outlined in the information sheet. Any concerns I may have had have been dealt with to my satisfaction.
9. I understand that all research data, including transcriptions of interviews, will be securely stored at the University of Tasmania premises for a period of five years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed unless I give permission for my data to be stored in an archive. Original recordings of interview sessions will be deleted permanently immediately after it has been transcribed.
10. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
11. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the

research. I understand that my participation in the focus groups is based on Chatham House Rules and that I commit to maintaining the confidentiality of information supplied by other participants

12. I agree that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any effect.

If I so wish, I may request that any non-approved data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research.

13. I declare that I am not:
    a. Pregnant
    b. A minor under 18 years of age
    c. Highly dependent on medical care
    d. Suffering from a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, or mental illness
    e. Involved in illegal activities.

Participant's name: ____

Participant's signature: ____

Date: ____________________

Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name: ____Laura Ripoll Gonzalez________________________________

Investigator's signature: ____

Date: ____________________

APPENDIX 5. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Title: Inclusive Policy Networks for Participatory Place Branding:
Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement
Using an Action Intervention Methodology

1. Participant's background in the field:

Please describe your background relevant to *putting Tasmania on the map*.

2. Situational context:

Please describe the motivations that led you to attempt to *put Tasmania on the map*.
Please explain your aim(s) and rationale.

3. Approach:

Please explain the approach taken for *putting Tasmania on the map*, the characteristics of such approach, your knowledge or understanding of such approach, and the motivations behind such choice.

4. Strategic planning process:

Please describe how did you structure the strategic planning process: stages, stakeholders involved, consultations, decision-making processes, etc.

5: Strategies, actions and communication of those:

Please describe the strategies identified and an overview of resources employed and implementation process.

6: Expected and real outcomes:

Please describe what were you expecting to achieve, what were your goals and what were the real outcomes of the strategies you implemented. Describe why did you achieve or not achieve such goals.

7: Problematic and frustrations

Please describe any issues encountered during the process of strategising or actioning/implementing the strategies planned.

8: Relationships with other stakeholders along the process:

Please detail the relationship with other stakeholders along the process. Please consider situations of collaboration, conflict if applicable, different interests and communication processes in place.

9: Reflections, lessons learnt, personal views and further remarks on how Tasmania is and should be put on the map:

Please explain here what did you learn and what would you change about the process by which you or your organisation attempted to put Tasmania on the map.

APPENDIX 6. THE PARTICIPANT –GOVERNED ALTERNATIVE MODEL

This Appendix contains the description of the alternative participant-governed network model presented to participants prior to the interventions.

A Network Model of Putting Places on the Map – Focus Group Discussion

PUTTING PLACES ON THE MAP VIA PLACE BRANDING: DOES IT WORK?

Place branding, the conventional approach to PPOM, has traditionally consisted of governments' tourism and economic development offices branding places to compete with other territories and/or to maintain positive reputations. Thus, consultants in the field are engaged to develop strategies based on marketing principles in order to advance the territory's economic and societal goals.

Since places are not products and are in constant change and evolution, the branding and marketing approach may not be effective because it often defaults to an instrumental attempt to address short-term issues (such as enhancing a negative reputation, increasing tourism or expanding exports). From this perspective, the management of places' images and reputations represents a governance rather than a marketing challenge. However, governments are locked in to short-term political cycles and prioritise projects that will deliver growth and jobs in the short term. Also, since they lack branding expertise, they often defer to the tourism and export industries to lead the branding and marketing efforts.

Furthermore, the advancement of communication technologies and the Internet have brought about a new paradigm for information exchange that challenges the traditional marketing approach. One-way communication messages are no longer effective in persuading publics to use and consume places. Consequently, governments and their promotional bodies need to adapt to multichannel and dialogue-based forms of communication and collaboration to PPOM.

Thus, recent literature by scholars and practitioners is recognising that governments' traditional Place Branding practices have not been as successful as expected to PPOM, and have called for a more holistic and inclusive approach that incorporates all stakeholders, including those in civil society.

Reflecting these new ideas, the diversity of interests and values, ideas, and knowledge are now viewed as being contested, and as requiring mediation and negotiation. New research on policy networks reflects on relational models where stakeholders share information and resources at all stages of the process of policymaking. The model presented below builds on the above ideas and is the topic of discussion for this focus group.

PUTTING PLACES ON THE MAP: THE NETWORK MODEL

An exhaustive review of the literature, combined with the findings of the data collected to date on the effectiveness of how places are put on the map suggests that governance networks could assist in developing effective place branding management structures and practices. This research project takes this idea a step further to argue that, beyond effectiveness, networks should be observed not only as the structure of governance, but as the underlying 'relationships of communication and collaboration between stakeholders'. The implication is, then, that their dynamics should be observed in their establishment, development and management stages. The network model suggested here emphasizes the patterns of communication and information sharing of all stakeholders with the common goal of PPOM. This research posits that, while open and horizontal communication networks will feature a significant degree of contested interests and values, that conflict can be mediated, common interests advanced, and mutual trust built through the establishment of inclusive, diverse, democratic and knowledge- based (innovative) networks.

As noted above, governments and organisations aiming at PPOM have traditionally been in charge of developing and implementing strategies based on one-way community consultation, and responding to particular (often short-term) political and other power interests. The network model introduced here suggests an alternative, collaborative structure of co-creation of strategies to PPOM based on networks of information and resource sharing. Such networks are adaptive, flexible, horizontal, self-governed, and based on mutual trust and common goals, and based on sustained dialogue. In practice, the network provides a forum for information and resource sharing, discussion, negotiation and learning.

The idea of participant-governed networks has been developed by a number of authors including Provan and Kenis (2007) and it is their work I build on here. According to Provan and Kenis, network members collaborate to achieve goals that would otherwise be outside the reach of individual stakeholders. Such networks are generally decentralised, less formal and dependent upon the social and human capital of their members.

The **network characteristics** are:

- **Grown organically**: It is grassroots and responds to needs and concerns from the whole community.
- **Membership is wide, stable and diverse**: Although as the network increases, shared governance becomes more and more inefficient, a structural solution would be to centralise network governance activities around a broker organisation.
- **Governance is shared**: partners make decisions and manage activities collectively and no single entity represents the network as a whole. Power is more or less symmetrical despite differences in size, resource capabilities and performance. There is no distinct, formal administrative entity, although coordination and administration may be performed by a subset of the network.
- **Funded from a mix of sources**: Not responsive to particular members' interests and ideas and does not respond to political pressures.
- **Goal-oriented**: follows a holistic approach to sustainable, long-term PPOM
- **Focus on tangible outcomes**.
- **Strong leadership**: Members represent community interests, and include the local government. Strong leadership and vision come from the collective commitment to common good that will benefit local community and economy, emerging from rigorous grassroots contestations.
- **Umbrella network** for communication, information sharing and collaboration: it is not an advisory network, or industry-led network, but a policy network (the aim is policymaking).
- High level of **positive engagement and ownership** over PPOM initiatives and actions
- **Regular** and well attended **meetings**.

- **Strong commitment** to sharing information, educating, learning and innovation: its values should stem from a visioning process with a development plan focusing on the 'triple bottom line'-like sustainability.
- **Transparent and accountable**: based in credibility and trust; open, ongoing dialogue and shared commitment are at the base of innovation and creativity, and regular communication builds trust; participants may have limited formal accountability, and conformity to procedures is voluntary.

The concept of PPOM depends on how it is interpreted in a particular socio-cultural context. However, a network model for governance for PPOM provides an opportunity to communicate, discuss and negotiate interpretations of PPOM or Place Branding from the different stakeholder groups involved. This research explores the thesis that a participant-governed network is a potentially effective way of putting Tasmania on the map. That is, by sharing knowledge in a participant-led network, different interests will better engage and take collective ownership of actions and initiatives, transcending public-private divides in the process.

Full commitment of the members will bring external and internal legitimacy, so actions and initiatives will be recognised by the wider community. In addition, to respond to issues quickly, stability based on internal coherence will be key in participant-led networks. In sum, the network approach focuses on the relational characteristics, tensions and trade-offs, and aims at developing better governance arrangements for the complex issue of PPOM.

DISCUSSION

In this discussion, as above-mentioned, we are interesting in exploring the feasibility of the participant-governed model in Tasmania. So I invite you to discuss today the following questions:

Could a participant-－ - governed network model be implemented for putting Tasmania on the map? Why/why not?

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